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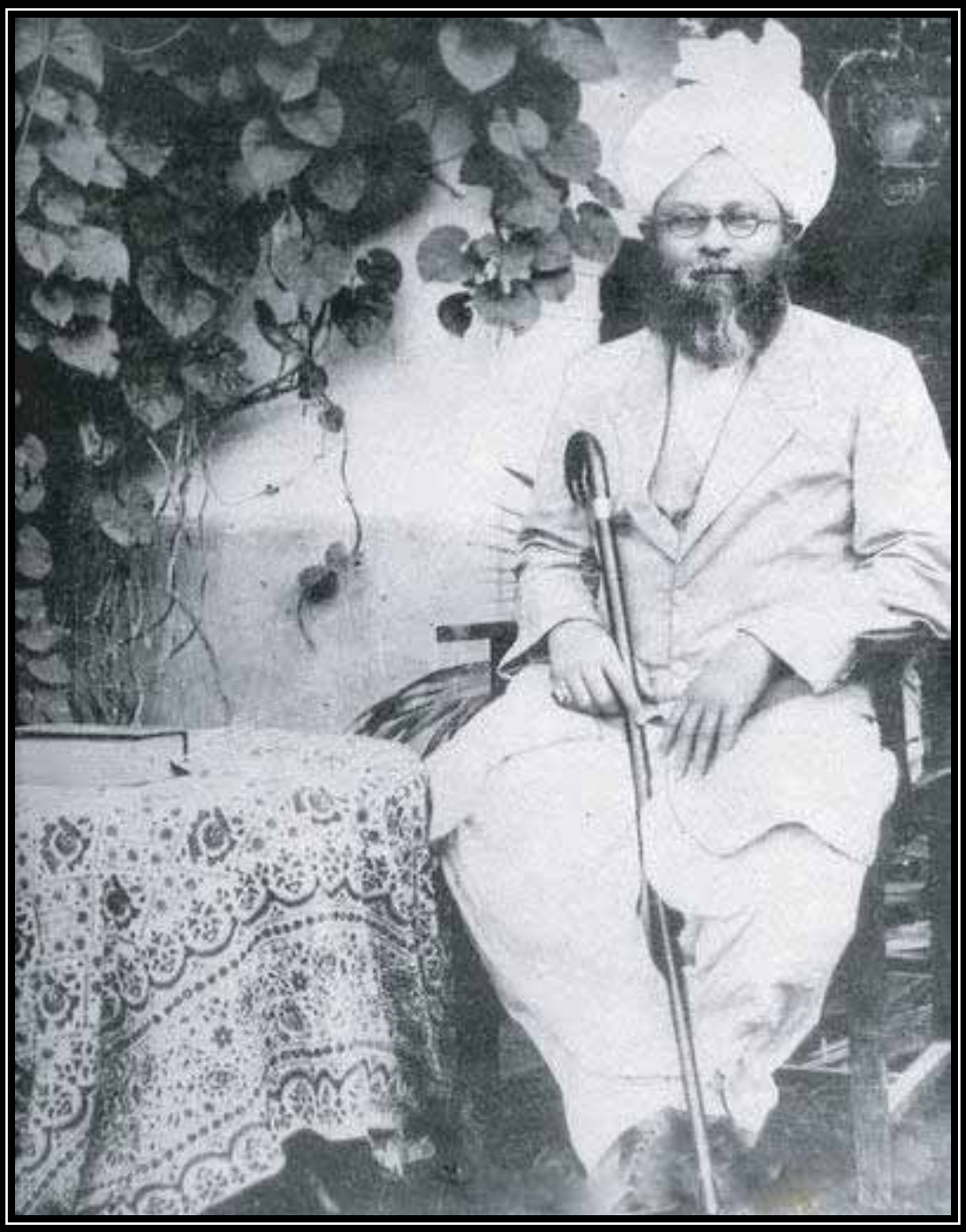
Gazette

USA

Musleh Mau'ood Edition



Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood (may Allah be pleased with him)

SAYINGS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH[as]

Four Principal Attributes of Allah

God Almighty has four principal attributes which may be called the mothers of all attributes. Every one of them makes a demand upon our humanness. These four are *Rabubiyyat, Rahmaniyyat, Rahimiyyat and Malikiyyat* of the Day of Judgment.

For its manifestation, ***Rabubiyya*t** demands nothingness, or a state resembling nothingness. Every form of creation, whether animate or inanimate, comes into being through it.

For its manifestation, ***Rahmaniyyat*** demands the absence of existence and its operation is related only to animates and not to in-animates.

Rahimiyyat demands for its manifestation an affirmation of their nothingness and non-existence from the part of creation which is endowed with reason and relates only to man.

Malikiyyat of the Day of Judgment demands for its manifestation humble supplication and pleading and relates only to such of mankind as fall like beggars on the threshold of Unity and spread forth their mantle of sincerity in order to receive grace and, finding themselves empty handed, believe in the *Malikiyyat* of God.

These four attributes are in operation all the time. Of these *Rahimiyyat* moves a person to supplication and *Malikiyyat* consumes a person in the fire of fear and terror and gives birth to true humility, for this attribute establishes that God is the Master of recompense and that no one has the right to demand anything. Forgiveness and salvation are through grace.

[Ayyam-us-Sulah, Roohani Khaza'in vol. 14, pp. 242-243]

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A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE FRIDAY SERMON

OF

HADHRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V[aba]

DELIVERED ON NOVEMBER 17, 2006

On 17th November 2006, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] delivered the Friday Sermon at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London.

Hazoorr[aba] said: According to various commentators and lexicons, the word *Rabb,* comprises everything from creating to taking something to its perfection. Hence *Rabb* is the being who creates things and takes them gradually to perfection. *Lisanul 'Arab* and *Tajul 'Urus* give seven meanings of the word *Rabb:*

Malik, Sayyed, Mudabbir, Murabbi, Qayyim Mun'im, and Mutammin

It is only to Allah that the word *Rabb,* can truly be applied, for *Rabb,* has to have full authority over His dominion. He should be able to do whatever He wants, without the need for a partner or an associate. *Mudabbir* is the one who produces the desired result. *Qayyim* means he who keeps eyes on things, puts them in order, accomplishes things, provides assistance, and establishes on the right path. *Al-Mun'im* is the one who grants all that is good, including joy and wellbeing. *Mutammin* is he who fulfils every need and removes every fault and weakness.

Hazoor[aba] said: Taking all these meanings together, *Rabb,* would mean the being Who is the most high and most dignified, Who has to be obeyed, Who is free from every weakness, Who knows the end of everything, Who accomplishes things for His creatures, Who assists, Who shows the way, Who fulfils all needs, who is not dependant upon another, and Who is the sole Lord and Master. The word *Rabb* has been used hundreds of times in the Holy Qur'an, and Allah has taught us many prayers and given us many injunctions with reference to this attribute.

Hazoor[aba] said: Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra], in his commentary has written that *Rabb* is the being Who is the Creator of all the worlds, Who is free from all weaknesses Who encompasses in Him all that is good, Who is aware of all secrets, and Who knows the reality of everything.

Hazoor[aba] said: It is the duty of every Ahmadi to establish a strong relationship with his *Rabb,* and, freeing himself of all indolence, should try to abide by His commandments.

Hazoor[aba] said: Allah has mentioned in the Holy Qur'an people who underwent suffering for His sake. In *Surah Al-Kahf* He gives the example of *Ashab-e-Kahaf* (the people of the cave) who endured great suffering for His sake. They endured every hardship but remained submissive to Him, and were rewarded with great blessings as a consequence. We, who believe in the Promised Messiah[as] should have the strongest relationship with our Lord. The tribulations that have come upon us are nothing as compared to those which the People of the Cave underwent. Let us recognize our Lord and remain subservient to Him. Let us remember that we believe in the Prophet[saw] upon whom the Law was completed. Our knowledge and understanding of God is far greater than those who have forgotten Him, who are drifting away from Him, and who have rejected Him. It is our job to tell them to recognize their God, who is the Lord of the worlds, and not to associate partners with Him, and to reflect upon the teachings of their own prophets, so that they may believe in the Seal of all Prophets. Otherwise they will never be able to find peace. The Promised Messiah[as] says, "Allah is the One Who encompasses in His being all the perfect attributes, Who is free from all faults and shortcomings, and from Whose bounty, as the *Rabb* of the universe, all creations benefit."

Hazoor[aba] prayed that may Ahmadies continue to progress in their recognition of *Rabbul Alameen,* and may Allah enable them to spread this realization to other people, so that the whole world should worship One God, and be grateful to Him, Who is their Lord and the Lord of the worlds. *Ameen.*

(Ch. Hameedullah)
Wakil A'la,
Tahrik Jadid Anjuman Ahmadiyya Pakistan

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THE MUSLIMS

The Muslims are a people who are ready to lay down their lives to uphold the honour of their Holy Prophet[saw]. They would prefer to die rather than endure the disgrace that they should make peace and become friends with such people who are occupied day and night with abusing the Holy Prophet[saw] and mention his name with contempt in their books, journals, and announcements and use vile language with reference to him. Such persons are not the well-wishers even of their own people, for they create numberless difficulties for them. I tell you truly that it is possible for us to make peace with the serpents of the jungle and the wild beasts of the forests, but we cannot make peace with those who do not refrain from speaking ill of God's Prophets and who consider that abuse and vituperation mean victory. True victory is that which comes from heaven.

Article attached to Chashma Ma'rifat, Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 23, p. 385-386]

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE FRIDAY SERMON

OF

HADHRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V[aba]

DELIVERED ON NOVEMBER 24, 2006

On 24th November 2006, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] delivered the Friday Sermon at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London.

Hazoor[aba] said: In my last Sermon I described the literal meanings of Allah's attribute of *Rabb* (the Sustainer) and I would continue with this subject today. The extract of the Promised Messiah[as] that I read out can be summarized as follows:

Allah is He who encompasses all attributes, whether we know them or not. All His attributes are at the highest level of perfection, and He is free of all shortcomings. His kindness and beneficence …. which reaches the epic of beauty …. is evident from His attributes All the gifts and bounties that man enjoys come from Him, and Him alone. Man cannot count His bounties. His attribute of 'Beneficence' is expressed through His attribute of *Rabbul Alameen* (the Lord and Sustainer of the Worlds), and benefits the whole of creation. If man were to look only at himself, he would find his being overwhelmed by Allah's favors. The attribute of *Rabbul Alameen* does not only relieve man of his difficulties but it is also the source of all the bounties that continue to rain down upon him. Unless a man's heart is dead, he can see the countless favors of God upon him. All these things require that man should turn towards the Being whose gifts cannot be equalled, and, keeping in mind His grace and beneficence, should offer such worship to Him as emanates spontaneously from the heart, and such worship should be expressive of his gratitude for His *Rabubiyyat.*

In the last Sermon I also said that in hundreds of places in the Holy Qur'an Allah cites His attribute of *Rabb* and tells us that our survival and our protection -- whether physical or spiritual -- is dependent upon Allah. We should therefore, remain submissive to Him, and beg only of Him. He says,

And your Lord says: 'Pray unto me; I will answer Your *prayer*. But those who are too proud to worship Me will surely enter Hell, despised.' It is Allah Who has made the night for you that you may rest therein, and the day *to enable you* to see. Verily, Allah is the Lord of bounty for mankind, yet most men are ungrateful. Such is Allah, your Lord, the Creator of all things. There is no God but He. How then are you turned away? Thus indeed are turned away those who deny the Signs of Allah. Allah it is Who has made for you the earth a resting-place, and the heaven a means of dependence and into figures He fashioned you and made your shapes excellent and provided you with wholesome provisions. He is the Living

God. There is no God but He. So pray unto Him, being sincere to Him in religion. All praise belongs to Allah,, the Lord of the worlds.

(Al-Mu'min, 40:61-66)

Hazoor[aba] said: These verses inform us that instead of being led astray by anyone else, we should establish our relationship with God, Who made provisions for our survival long before we were born. He has appointed countless creatures to serve us, and has given us the best appearances and provided us with abundant provisions. These things also tell us that we have a Lord who looks after all the worlds. If we prostrate before Him, He will increase His bounties upon us. Therefore do not run after the temporary things of this world, instead run towards your Living Lord Who loves you most; or else Satan is standing in your way. Allah does not need you, nor does He need to be praised by His creatures; His only pleasure is that you should follow His path.

Hazoor[aba] said: Each Ahmadi should keep repeating to Himself, *Rabbunallah,* 'Allah is our Lord'. In this age, *Shirk* has crossed all bounds, Allah's attribute as the *Rabb* (Sustainer) is being rejected, and contention and disharmony are rampant. Only an Ahmadi truly recognizes Allah as the Sustainer. If we do not give a new life to our worship, and do not appreciate Allah's favors, and do not transform our lives according to the teachings of the Promised Messiah[as], all our claims will be hollow and empty, and Allah gives no reward for such claims.

Hazoor[aba] prayed: May Allah enable us to truly recognize our Sustainer, so that we can make other people aware of His bounties as well; so that more and more people become worshippers of the One God; and the world can become an abode of peace and harmony.

Ch. Hameedullah
Wakil A'la,
Tahrik Jadid Anjuman Ahmadiyya Pakistan

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The Holy Prophet[saw]

The life of the Holy Prophet[saw] was a life of grand success. In his high moral qualities, his spiritual power, his high resolve, the excellence and perfection of his teaching, his perfect example and the acceptance of his prayers, in short, in every aspect of his life, he exhibited such bright signs that even a person of low intelligence, provided he is not inspired by unreasonable rancour and enmity, is forced to confess that he was a perfect example of manifesting the Divine qualities and was the perfect man.

(Al-Hakam, 10 April 1902, p. 5)

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE FRIDAY SERMON

OF

HADHRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V[aba]

DELIVERED ON DECEMBER 1, 2006

On 1st December 2006, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] delivered the Friday Sermon at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London.

Hazoor[aba] said: Our only response to Allah's favors should be with a feeling of gratitude and thankfulness. This feeling should be accompanied by the worship of Allah, and we should never allow ourselves to be ensnared by Satanic inspirations. Hazoor[aba] said: The whole universe, the human body— along with all its organs and its abilities—the day and the night, all our means of sustenance, all the harvests that we reap, all the clothes that we wear, all the birds and animals, all the things that protect us from heat and cold, all the means of transport which man uses to conquer earth, air and space, (these days we do not use animals for transport, but the vehicles are run on fuel and it is Allah Who provides it for us), all these things form a list of Allah's favors upon us, and each of them merits our gratitude.

Hazoor[aba] said: The unfortunate thing is that instead of being grateful for these Divine favors, most people are turning away from Allah. This makes it all the more necessary that Abmadies should worship Allah in the manner that He has prescribed, and obey him completely, and turn to Him with the awareness of His favors. They should turn to Him alone and should never look at the inconsequential idols of this world. They should pray: 'O Allah, forgive us, and protect us against every evil and every sin, and when the time comes for us to return to Thee, do count us among Thy righteous servants,'

Hazoor[aba] said: When I speak about some evil practices or trends, people seem to think that that particular evil is only found in the country where I delivered the address or the sermon. This is a misconception. The fact is that modern day communications have brought the world together, and this has caused evil to spread. And it was in the face of this global necessity that Allah gave us MTA. Remember that my exhortations apply to all Ahmadies, and my address is aimed at everyone. Do not try to find excuses so that you may avoid acting upon my instructions.

Hazoor[aba] quoted several prayers and urged the Jama'at to offer them regularly. Hazoor[aba] said: If you really want to witness the acceptance of prayers you should first fulfill their requirements. If you do not perform righteous deeds, you deprive yourselves of the blessings of prayers. Only through piety can prayers benefit us, otherwise we will only be deceiving ourselves.

Hazoor[aba] said: Pray for piety and righteousness, and always speak the truth. We can only establish the rights of Allah and the rights of man if we wage a *Jihad* against *Shirk* and falsehood. Always remain steadfast upon the truth and let it always be foremost in your minds. Never speak a word that is contrary to the truth, and do not do anything that is opposed to it. This is what every Ahmadi should strive for and pray for.

Hazoor[aba] said: Every Ahmadi should do his work diligently and honestly, and should also be honest in his dealings with others. People who work for the Jama'at should not allow any slackness or anything contrary to the truth to come in their way. Analyze yourselves every night, if you find that you have maintained your standard of *Taqwa*, well and good, but if your standard of *Taqwa* is declining you have something to worry about.

At the close of the sermon, Hazoor[aba] read an extract from the writings of the Promised Messiah[as]: "You are only entitled to say *Rabbana* (O' our Lord), when you completely submit to Allah, having driven out of your heart every thought of your wealth, your beauty or your plans. Give up every *Shirk* with repulsion and repel falsehood, *Shirk* and theft, otherwise it is difficult to make Allah your *Rabb*."

Hazoor[aba] prayed: May Allah enable every Ahmadi to recognize his *Rabb*, and that we may submit to Him and to Him alone.

Ch. Hameedullah
Wakil A'la,
Tahrik Jadid Anjuman Ahmadiyya Pakistan

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Holy Qur'an – the Universal Book

The Book that would have been revealed at the beginning of creation could not, according to reason, be a perfect Book. It would be like a teacher who teaches children the alphabet. It is obvious that for such elementary instruction, no great ability is needed. When human experience increased and man fell into many errors, detailed instruction became necessary especially when the darkness of error became widespread and human souls became involved in diverse types of intellectual and practical misguidance. At that time a superior and perfect teaching was needed and that came in the Holy Qur'an. In the beginning instruction of a high grade was not needed for human souls were simple and no darkness or misguidance had settled on them. Superior teaching was needed in the book which appeared at the time of extreme misguidance and came for the reform of the people whose false doctrines had become confirmed and whose evil conduct had become a habit.

[Chashma Ma'rifat, Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 23, p. 70, footnote]

CONDITIONS OF BAI'AT AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN AHMADI

First Condition: Abstaining from *SHIRK*

Mubasher Ahmad

Regional Missionary, West Midwest Region

On July 27, 2003 , on the occasion of Jalsa Salana UK, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] initiated a series of addresses and sermons explaining the significance of the ten conditions of ***Bai'at*** of repentance in the lives of Ahmadies. The first condition of ***Bai'at*** specifically deals with avoiding the greatest of all the sins in the following words:

"**The initiate shall solemnly promise that he/she shall abstain from *Shirk* right up to the day of his/her death."**

In Islam, associating any partner with One God is the most deplorable and the most devastating of all the sins. We can imagine the grievousness of this sin knowing that all other sins, major or minor, are forgivable, but Allah has declared ***Shirk*** as unforgivable!

Hazoor[aba] elaborated the importance of the first condition of *Bai'at* in the light of the commandments of the Holy Qur'an concerning ***Shirk***, some *Ahadith* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] and also the words of the Promised Messiah[as]. He made the Ahmadies aware of the fact that ***Shirk*** can be committed in many forms and they have to stand guard against the subtleness of Satanic instigation. To associate anyone in the name, action, or worship of God constitutes ***Shirk.***

Hazoor[aba] re-enforced the teaching of the Promised Messiah[as] that there are many things that we might associate them with God when we start giving preference to our worldly things over spiritual and religious considerations. These things include our hidden desires and ostentation in our actions. The Promised Messiah[as] has warned his followers that it is possible that they might think that they are not committing any ***Shirk*** because they say ***"La Ilaha Illallah"*** with their tongues, but then they could be hiding hundreds of idols in their hearts. The examples of the hidden ***Shirk*** are such as depending on our own plans or clever designs, too much reliance on our mental and material resources, or to count on the help of another person, and not giving full reverence to the help and grace of God alone. When a worshipper of Allah approaches Him with a pure and sincere heart free of any self-ishness, seeking His help, then Allah grants him/her His Mercy and becomes his/her Provider and Protector.

Hazoor's[aba] Urdu speeches and Friday *Khutbaat* on the conditions of ***Bai'at*** have been compiled together and published in a book form. Also, in 2006 an English translation was published by Islam International Publications Ltd. It is of utmost importance that we all should read Hazoor's[aba] addresses and Friday sermons in the original Urdu and /or its English translation which are available to all Ahmadies in the USA.

The Great Prophecy of Musleh Mau'ood

Following is the prophecy given by God Almighty to the Promised Messiah[as] *commonly known as the Prophecy of Musleh Mau'ood, regarding an illustrious son with many wonderful qualities which were fulfilled in the person of Hadhrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad*[ra]*, who later became the second Khalifah of the Jama'at Ahmadiyya. (English translation by Chaudhary Muhammad Zafrullah Khan*[ra]*)*

In the announcement of February 20, 1886, the Promised Messiah[as] says:

"God the Merciful, the Noble, the High, the Exalted, Who has power to do all that He wills (Glory be to Him and exalted be His name), has vouchsafed to me the following revelation:

I confer upon thee a Sign of My mercy according to thy supplications. I have heard thy entreaties and have honored thy prayers with My acceptance through My mercy and have blessed this thy journey (of *Hoshiarpur* and *Ludhiana*). A sign of power, mercy, and nearness to Me is bestowed on thee. A Sign of grace and beneficence is awarded to thee and thou art granted the key of success and victory. Peace on thee, O Victorious one. Thus does God speak so that those who desire life may be rescued from the grip of death and those who are buried in the graves may emerge there from and so that the superiority of Islam and the dignity of God's word may become manifest unto the people and so that they may arrive with all its blessings and falsehood may depart with all its ills, and so that people may understand that I am the Lord of Power, I do whatever I will, and so that they may believe that I am with thee, and so that those who do not believe in God and deny and reject His religion and His Book and His Holy Messenger Muhammad, the chosen one[saw] may be confronted with a clear sign and the way of the guilty ones may become

manifest.

Rejoice, therefore, that a handsome and pure boy will be bestowed on thee. Thou will receive a bright youth who will be of thy seed and will be of thy progeny. A handsome and pure boy will come as your guest. His name is Emanuel and Bashir. He has been invested with a Holy Spirit and he will be free from all impurity. He is the light of Allah. Blessed is he who comes from heaven. He will be accompanied by grace which shall arrive with him. He will be characterized with grandeur, greatness and wealth. He will come into the world and will heal many of their disorders through his Messianic qualities and through the blessings of the Holy Spirit. He is the Word of Allah for Allah's Mercy and Honor have equipped him with the Word of Majesty.

He will be extremely intelligent and understanding and will be meek of heart and will be filled with secular and spiritual knowledge. He will convert three into four (of this the meaning is not clear). It is Monday, a blessed Monday. Son, delight of heart,

مَظْهَرَ الْاَوَّلِ وَالْاٰخِرِ مَظْهَرَ الْحَقِّ

وَالْعَلَآءِ كَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ نَزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ

high ranking, noble; a manifestation of the First and the Last, a manifestation of the True and the High; as if Allah has descended from heaven. His advent will be greatly blessed and will be a source of manifestation of Divine Majesty. Behold, a light cometh, a light anointed by God with the perfume of His pleasure. We shall pour Our spirit into him and he will be sheltered under the shadow of God. He will grow rapidly in stature and will be the means of procuring the release of those held in bondage. His fame will spread to the ends of the earth and peoples will be blessed through him. He will then be raised to his spiritual station in heaven. This is a matter decreed."

وَكَانَ اَمْرًا مَّقْضِيًّا

(19:22)

THE BACKGROUND OF THE MUSLEH MAU'OOD PROPHECY

In 1885, some Hindus of Qadian wrote a letter to Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as], asking for a sign to be shown to them within a year, between September 1885 and September 1886. He replied to their letter in the affirmative. This correspondence was also published in the form of a notice by Lala Shrampat Rai of Qadian, a member of the *Arya Samaj*. There is a record of all of this in *Roohani Khaza'in. Majmua Ishtiharat,* Vol. 1, pp. 91-96.

Hadhrat Ahmad[as] undertook to spend 40 days in a solitary retreat in January 1886 in *Hoshiarpur*, spending all his time in Divine worship and supplication. Whatever Divine revelations or signs he would receive would be an answer to the demand for a sign by the Hindus of Qadian.

At the end of this period of solitary retreat, he published a handbill on February 20, 1886 from *Hoshiarpur*, detailing a revelation from God in the form of a prophecy.

This announcement of February 20, 1886 was also published in the newspaper *Riaz-e-Hind, Amritsar,* on March 1, 1886. The entire material published in this newspaper is recorded in *Roohani Khaza'in: Majmu'a Ishtiharat,* Vol 1, pp. 97-103.

It is interesting to note that when Lekh Ram, the *Arya Samaj* leader, received this prophecy, he ventured to publish a counter prophecy. The details of these developments are a topic in themselves and will not be dealt with here. It may be noted here that the contest of *Arya Samaj* with Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as] was at its height in those days and resulted in books written by him, addressing *Arya Samaj*, e.g., *Surma Chishm Arya* and *Shahna-i-Haq.*

God bestowed a son on Hadhrat Ahmad[as] on January 12, 1889. He was named Mahmood. In the announcement of 1886, the Promised Son was predicted to be born within NINE YEARS. He was in fact born within THREE YEARS, thus nullifying any criticism by Ahmad's[as] opponents that nine years was too long a time. The full name of the son was Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad.

It is noteworthy that all these events took place before Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as] laid the foundations of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, before he took a *Bai'at* (initiation) of even the first devotee. The first *Bai'at* was taken on March 23, 1889 when Hadhrat Mirza Mahmood Ahmad was already a few weeks old.

Hadhrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad[ra] was of frail health in his early age and had a severe problem with his eyes. Because of this problem, he did not make much progress in his schooling and was unable to complete his high school He was asked by his father, the Promised Messiah[as], to learn the Qur'an

Qur'an and Hadith from Hadhrat Maulana Noorud-Din[ra], the devotee who was the first to take the oath of initiation on March 23, 1889.

On the demise of the Promised Messiah[as] in May, 1908, Hadhrat Maulana Noorud Din[ra] was elected as the Khalifatul Masih I. Hadhrat Mirza Mahmood Ahmad[ra] was 19 years old at that time. He took an ever increasing role in the affairs of the Community but was always intensely loyal to the Khalifatul Masih I[ra].

On the demise of the Khalifatul Masih I[ra] in 1914, Hadhrat Mirza Mahmood Ahmad[ra] was elected the Khalifatul Masih II. By worldly standards, he was not a well educated person. There were some highly educated persons in the Community. One such member, Maulana Muhammad Ali, who had a Master's degree (a rare thing in those days in India) thought that he was much more qualified and should be entrusted with running the affairs of the Community.

The high school dropout who was elected as the Head of the Ahmadiyya Community, turned out to be a man full of wisdom and knowledge. He fulfilled all the predictions in the prophecy of the Promised Son made in 1886. His writings are treasures of knowledge. More notable, however, are his lectures, sermons and other discourses.

The Promised Messiah[as] wrote so many books in his lifetime that he became the KING OF THE PEN. The Khalifatul Masih II[ra], the Promised Son, gave so many speeches, all full of knowledge, that he became the KING OF ORATION.

From a small community primarily found in India, the Ahmadiyya Movement grew, under his able leadership, and was established in many countries around the world. For this endeavor of international propagation, he initiated a new scheme in 1934, the *Tehrik-e-Jadid*. This exhorts members to live a simple life, shun luxuries, and contribute in a special fund earmarked for the spread of Ahmadiyyat around the world.

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SUPPORT HUMANITY FIRST

HADHRAT MUSLEH MAU'OOD[ra]

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] was a genius and possessed a dynamic personality. He was the image of his great father. His period of *Khilafat* lasted 52 years. This became the glorious period in the history of the *Jama'at*. Membership increased vastly, numerous missions and mosques were established in various foreign countries with his efforts and administrative ability. When storms of persecution arose as a result of bigotry and fanaticism, his forbearance and prayers steered the community out of dangers.

He fulfilled every aspect of the great prophecy by the Promised Messiah and Mahdi[as]. How could one have predicted about such a son without knowledge from God? Even when a son was born how could one have known that he will reach adulthood in a land of epidemics and fanatics and that he will possess so many great qualities and achieve so much success. Fulfillment of this prophecy is an irrefutable proof of the truth of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi[as].

Welcome to Ahmadiyyat, the True Islam

ISLAH-E-A'MAAL

A speech delivered by

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II

on February 16, 1919 in Lahore

Translated by: Asif Omer, North Jersey

In life and death there are lessons for the thinking man. One fundamental difference between man and animal is that where animal existence is in most part solitary and unconnected, man's life is interwoven and interdependent, one with another. Among animals, at most there is the dependency between male and the female. In lower forms of life even that is done away with. In humans it is not a question of dependency between a few; man's needs and requirements are such that the entire mankind is affected by the actions of each other. This can be compared to a perturbation in a medium which produces a wave that ripples away in all directions reaching far and wide, while progressively getting faint with time and distance. Man's action is equivalent. It spreads like a wave such that it envelops the entire mankind. These waves can be subtle, which prevents their easy observation, yet all of man's actions, thoughts, conversations and movements have the element of global impact. Sometimes it is noticeable and at other times it cannot be perceived; nevertheless its spread is global in scope regardless of the strength of the action which produces it.

Such ideas were difficult to intellectually grasp in the past, but with the advances in various branches of knowledge, we know that the faintest phenomena are detectable through appropriate means. Take the telegraph for example. Electrical waves created at one end of a wire can be faithfully reproduced at the remote end, a long distance away.

The spiritual world has a similar system. Like waves propagating in the physical world, the spiritual world propagates waves of the spiritual kind. In some cases these are strong and vibrant and are felt by all, and in other instances these are only perceived by those with special means and ability. It is not unlike a radio message which permeates the surroundings yet is only detectable by one with access to a radio receiver.

Spiritual waves produced by the Prophets of Allah are of such power that they spread over large expanses of land, sometimes over a region and at other times over an entire country. These waves have been produced on many occasions and an untold number of people have felt their power. We do not have an account of the ancient past, but from what is preserved in the Holy Qur'an we know about Noah and his followers. They were subjected to cruel and inhuman treatment, but the spiritual energy produced by them was felt by many. The spiritual energy generated at the

time of Abraham was of such power that it was felt on a vast tract of land.

Another giant spiritual wave was produced at the time of Moses, which succeeded in bringing deliverance to a nation that was demeaned and despised, from the grips of an oppressor which was grand and powerful. Moses did not have a powerful army at his disposal, but he had a heart full of humility towards his Creator. Energy produced by that heart gave life to a nation that was utterly degraded. Even to be seen by a member of the ruling class meant death for them. The Pharaoh would wear a veil to avoid seeing them accidentally. Is it possible to conceive of a people more despised? Muslims today feel hurt when Hindus take anything touched by them to be unclean, but can this be compared to the humiliation suffered by the Israelites? Among such a miserable and pathetic nation, Moses created a spiritual surge that yanked them out of slavery into an existence of freedom, honor and dignity. Later generations of Israelites saw more but comparatively less powerful waves. These culminated some thirteen hundred years after Moses in another large wave of spiritual energy which affected much of the world.

Finally, the spiritual energy of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] created the largest spiritual wave ever. It came at a time when much of the world was covered in the darkness of ignorance. Its relevance was not confined to any particular nation or people. It started in Arabia, a region carrying no significance over other parts of the world, yet its power was felt across the world by every believing and non-believing man; a fact conceded even by the Christian and Jewish orientalists of Europe.

Whether one accepts Moses and Jesus or not, there can be little doubt that a spiritual wave was produced at their time which brought about a change in the Israelites. The undeniable spiritual upheaval at the time of the Holy Prophet[saw] of Islam was felt by every soul. The Holy Prophet's[saw] mission started at a time when polytheism was the predominant creed in the world. A small number of people believed in the Unity of God, but they were scattered and had no influence. Polytheism was the dominant and fashionable practice. Jews who were traditionally Unitarians, were calling Uzair the son of God. Zoroastrians, with their original teachings based on pure unity, abandoned it in favor of a Duality. Hindus of India were deep into idolatry. Christians adopted the 'Sonship' of Jesus as a cardinal element of their faith. Unity was in global retreat. It was as if these nations were afraid of Unity, lest it regressed them in some way. Their attitude was not unlike the attitude of some Muslims of today who consider *purdah* (veil) an obstacle to progress and attempt to dilute it on one pretext or another. Their apologetic attitude towards polygamy is another example. They attempt to conceal it as much as possible, convinced of it is as an indefensible practice. To them the only way to worldly progress is by following modern trends otherwise they fear being left behind. This attitude has caused some to question the fundamentals of faith such as *Salat*, arguing that it is quite enough to casually remember Allah, while seated comfortably in a chair for example. The idea of the Unity of God was similarly discredited at the time of the advent of the Holy Prophet[saw]. All religions were afflicted with this disease to one degree or another. Polytheism was considered a progressive ideology and monotheism a recipe for national retrogression. History does not

give us a clue to the identity of the person whose heart emitted this evil wave, but this wave was certainly produced and with the helping hand of satanic forces it spread across the globe.

There were some Arabs at the time of the Holy Prophet[saw] who believed in the Unity of God. They were, however, few in number and without influence. Their traces can be found in their poetry but their collective force was akin to that of a leaf in a mighty river. In opposition to that mighty current of polytheism stood Muhammad[saw], from whose heart gushed forth a counter wave. In a short span of a handful of years it rooted out idolatry and *shirk* in all its aspects from the Arabian society. Concurrent to that, we see a global change in attitude towards Unity. People and faiths totally dominated by polytheism, began to claim that they too believed in the Unity of God. Today we find many followers of such religions are reaching the conclusion that idolatrous practices were only a later innovation. At their genesis these religions taught nothing but Unity of God. So what provided the impetus for this change of heart? This realization started to come through only after the advent of the Holy Prophet[saw] of Islam. Christians have always proudly presented the notion of the sonship of Jesus as a discriminating element of superiority over other religions. In fact the structure of their faith rests on Jesus being the son of God. Today even they would insist, albeit through convoluted reasoning, that they too only believe in the Unity of God. Why this change? The passion which swelled in the heart of the Holy Prophet[saw] has penetrated their hearts and is working to demolish idolatry from within. That is the reason. Its working is hidden from ordinary observation, but is clearly visible to those who ponder and reflect.

Every feeling, wish or impulse that rises in a heart creates a real external effect. This is not very easy to comprehend for those who reject the existence of spiritual phenomena. How could an external effect be produced by something as ephemeral as a mere thought? Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I[ra] used to tell of a Sikh youth who was studying in Lahore and was close to the Promised Messiah[as]. This boy once wrote to the Promised Messiah[as] that when at college he found himself entertaining atheistic thoughts. The Promised Messiah[as] wrote back that he should change his seat. He did this and in that way got rid of the problem. Some individuals who would sit near him were emitting a negative energy which this youth was unable to resist. His own protective shield of faith was too weak to protect him from being subdued and influenced. The solution was in increasing the physical distance from the source of this negative influence.

It is commonly observed that a thought comes to mind but before one can put it to words someone else utters it. So the energy given off by a feeling travels like a wave and spreads all around. That wave may be powerful or it may be weak. When strong, it is perceptible by many and when weak it may only be detected by someone with a special ability or common interest. Every thought has a real, tangible existence; an existence that travels, influences and modifies the surroundings and permeates minds of other people.

Since the thoughts of every one of us influences everyone else, let no one consider himself or herself small and unimportant. Everyone carries a responsibility for staying guarded over one's thoughts. The

outcome of one's thoughts and actions is not as limited and confined as generally imagined, instead it perpetuates far and wide and causes a constructive or destructive effect as it travels. In some cases this may be profound and in other cases exceedingly faint.

In the Holy Qur'an we find the evidence of this phenomenon in the chapter *Al-Nas*. These verses tell us of the negative energy that comes from those who remain hidden but influence others through the whisperings of their evil thoughts.

In the same vein, it has been observed that when the time for a new idea comes, people otherwise unconnected start proclaiming it, as if, simultaneously. It is said that Darwin's theory of evolution is propounded by three individuals: one English, other French and the third, a German. They were each other's contemporaries and hence influenced each other's thoughts.

It is for this reason that the company of the righteous has been so enjoined, in preference to the reading of their ideas or learning of them second-hand. Why such stress on physical company? There was such tremendous emphasis on availing the company of the Holy Prophet[saw] and the company of the Promised Messiah[as] as if nothing else was more important. Their teachings could have been passed through other means but an indirectly sourced message even if it is faithfully reproduced is stripped of the feeling that emanates from the heart and which can only be directly received. Not every receiving heart has the ability to resonate to a distant signal, therefore enormous stress is laid on being near the righteous where a stronger signal causes even a less capable heart to respond.

The Promised Messiah[as] was once told through revelation that his companions would be best, the next generation would not attain the same status as the first, and the generation following that would be lesser still. Holy Prophet[saw] said the same about his own followers. The question is that if the only source of spiritual purification is the Qur'an and the Hadith, which remain equally accessible to all future generation, then why this progressive degradation in the quality of the faithful? The reason, of course, is that the companions were direct recipients of the pure energy radiated by the hearts of these holy personages. The energy of that signal, as with any other type of energy, dissipates and grows faint over time, though it remains in perpetuity, yet with time it grows less accessible. Those who perceive it, do so short of the full extent, and consequently the later generations suffer a progressive loss in spiritual quality.

One proof of temporal and spatial proximity being a powerful influence between people is commonly observed when, say, a request made while in attendance is seen to have a higher chance of acceptance than one made through a third party or a letter. Similarly, a speech that is heard directly moves the heart more strongly compared to reading about it in print. A scribe may be able to preserve every word, but there are no means at his disposal to convey the energy given off by the heart of the speaker and which can only be felt by the immediate audience. It was for this very reason, that a *mujadid* (refor-mer) was raised in every century. The words of the Qur'an do not carry the same revitalizing energy as when they are uttered by a person who is spiritually cleansed by Allah.

Every thought coming to the mind and every

feeling emerging in the heart begins an outward bound surge of energy. Its intensity differs from one instance to another and so does its external effect. Those who do not hold a position of leadership or consequence, and so considering themselves mere bystanders they commit a grave error and cause much damage when they utter an irresponsible or divisive statement. Such frivolous talk may not have an immediate visible effect but the energy of that utterance travels and corrupts people who are not adequately equipped to defend against it.

A believer should be mindful over his every word and action. Anyone who disregards this instruction is responsible for spreading a poison through the means of his actions, speech and thought – a poison that can potentially inflict spiritual death on a large number of people totally unknown to him. Such a person is an obstacle to those who are trying their best to spread the message of Islam. So we should keenly watch over what we say and should avoid any utterance that produces even the most minor division in our ranks. The best way to fight such negative impulses is through positive thoughts and resolves. A person whose mind is thus occupied would be aiding the spread of Islam even though he may be sitting idly at home.

Hadhrat Umar[ra] once said that the intention of a believer is superior to his action. On surface this sounds improbable. How can intention alone surpass action in merit? The fact is that when a person resolutely sets his heart with a pure intention, its beneficial effect starts to spread. Of course a good action is guaranteed to flow from a resolve which is firm and pure. However, a good action without an accompanying intention can at best set a good example for those people who witness that action but a heart that is resolutely set on attaining good will foster similar thoughts on a much larger scale.

It befits a believer to remain constantly aware of his thoughts. He should strive to let positive thoughts flow through his mind and should actively block out the negative ones. Such control is not very difficult to achieve. Once a person leans towards God, his heart comes under control and then only righteous and pure thoughts start germinating in the mind.

It is of paramount importance for the members of the Jama'at to reform their thoughts and intentions. There are many among us who do not give this matter adequate attention. Those who attain control over their heart have reached their goal. The Holy Prophet[saw] once said about Hadhrat Abu Bakr[ra], that his distinction was not due to *Salat*, *Roza*, *Zakat* and *Hajj*, but it was due to the state of his heart. On another occasion the Holy Prophet[saw] said that a person spends all his life in works that lead to Paradise but there is something in his heart that makes him stumble towards the end of his life and he falls into the Fire. Then there are others whose actions bring them close to the Fire, but there is something in their hearts that causes Allah to pull them back just as they are about to fall into it and admits them into His Paradise. This shows that superficial actions alone are not sufficient for attaining deliverance. Without the light of faith illuminating one's heart even a minor trial can cause a person to fall from grace. Actions alone are shallow and limited, and are only rendered profundity through the purity of the heart. A person may otherwise follow the injunctions of Islam but if from his

heart comes out a negative energy that impedes and hinders its progress, then such a person is in fact an opponent of Islam. The Holy Prophet[saw] once said that man should remain wary of one organ in his body, because if that one organ is in health the whole body is in health and if that one organ is diseased then the whole body ails. That organ is the heart. A person with a pure heart helps in spreading the message of Islam. From his home he is influencing people far and wide. He preaches to Japan, he preaches to China, to Europe and to America, in fact he preaches and propagates to the whole world.

The Promised Messiah[as] did not travel across the world spreading his message. But the spiritual energy that was released by him is spreading across the world and matters of faith are coming to prominence among every people. These people may not be accepting him or his message at this time, but their case is like that of a person who is regaining consciousness and is only capable of reaching for an object that is close at hand. Nations are now waking from a long slumber, and in this state of semi-consciousness they can only grasp at something which is within their reach. Once they are fully awake they will start paying attention to the real message.

So the energy wave produced in a heart propagates far and wide. This wave is more perceptible closer to its origin. A prophet of God is both the source as well as the hub of all spiritual energy. He spreads it all around him from a location he selects as his base. In the early years of his commission, the Promised Messiah[as] undertook travel in the course of preaching and propagation, but later he settled at one place. We see the same pattern in the life of the Holy Prophet[saw]. Initially he traveled for spreading his message, but later in his life he would not leave his hometown except on military missions. Jesus also traveled to Kashmir but once he reached there he settled down. So we see a pattern, prophets travel in the early part of their missions but eventually they establish a base and seek to spread their influence from there. The message of the Promised Messiah[as] was similarly spread. Though it may not be noticeable at this time, but that time is not far off when it will become clear that his influence has reached everywhere. So the cleansing of one's heart is of the utmost importance. Those who ignore which impacts other people and repels them away in disgust. I therefore urge you all to purify your hearts such that you can also play a constructive role in the propagation of faith. Those among our community who do not strive towards self-purification, not only will they fail to achieve a high spiritual standard but they will also prove to be an obstacle for others. There are many who consider financial sacrifice to be the ultimate benchmark of faith. They pay according to their means, commit to *Wassiyat*, and offer other manner of sacrifices, but we find them stumbling in minor trials. It shows that though their action were ostensibly good, but faith had not anchored in their hearts and as such their purification was not yet complete. The state of their heart can be described like a thinly encrusted filth, which ruptures with a little knock and the foul odor spreads all around. We know of several such cases where minor complaints and grudges cause people to stumble and fall. I learnt of a particular person who was showing signs of weakness. When I sent some people to meet him, he told them that he needed some money which *'Mian Sahib'* did not provide, but the Lahoris did, so now he was obliged to side with them. If it is

accepted that we were in error in not helping him out, even so, how does that prove that Hadhrat Mirza Sahib[as] was not a prophet or that his deniers remain Muslims? For this person to abandon his faith on something like this shows that there was a thin mask over him which tore when subjected to a little pressure and exposed the foulness within. This happens when a heart is not fully purified. If the truth of the Holy Prophet[saw] is firmly embedded in someone's heart, such a person would unhesitatingly give up his life but would never give up his faith. He would never deny the Holy Prophet's[saw] truth even if his family be slain in front of his eyes. Similarly, one whose heart testifies to the prophethood of the Promised Messiah[as] will face up to every trial and hardship but will not deny that prophethood. However, someone who pays only lip service to his beliefs will recant on a minor trial. So it is vital that hearts be cleansed of all manners of blots, blemishes and impurities. You all need to pay special attention to this matter. Superficial action will not be enough to save you. Acts of worship such a *Salaat*, *Roza*, *Hajj* and *Zakat* will only be recognized as such when these are performed by someone with a pure heart. When a heart is cleansed, all actions are automatically rendered pure.

How can a heart be purified? It is an involved discussion and my health does not allow me to speak for long. Suffice to say that the Promised Messiah[as] has expounded at length on this subject in his writings. My purpose is to awaken you to the realization of this very important matter. It is up to you to derive benefit from my exhortations.

Once our *Jama'at* achieves purification of the heart, no hardship will succeed in leading it astray from the *sirat-e-mustaqeem* (straight path). It will become impervious to insult or injury damaging its belief system, regardless of whether the threat comes from within or from outside. Once this is achieved by all of us our progress will accelerate manifold. It will rise like a flood before which edifices of darkness and ignorance crumble without resistance. At this time, old and decrepit structures are being demolished and new foundations are being laid. It is a difficult time when a dilapidated house is demolished. At least it is capable of providing a measure of protection, even if inadequate. If one part of the roof leaks, shelter can be obtained in under another part. In summer it protects from the sun and in winter it keeps out the cold. But when such a house is demolished even that token shelter is lost. The house of Islam, which had weakened by the deeds of its incompetent custodians is in the process of being demolished, and in its place a new house of Islam is being built. We are happy that a decrepit structure is being replaced with a new one, but this new construction will take tremendous care, attention and hard work to complete, and we should prepare ourselves for that kind of effort. At this time we have at the most two or three Muslim governments in the world. These are taken to be the representatives of Islam. But they are like ramshackle structures, which are being pulled down so that Muslims may be warned and so they may awaken. Now a new house will be built. It is not going to be built by the sword, but it will be built through spiritual means. These are delicate and dangerous times for the Muslims, but we have a firm faith in our Lord that the new house of Islam is indeed going to be built. We need to apply the hard work and effort that is needed for its construction.

Today's man is busy running after the world. Even those who call themselves religious, ultimately vest their trust in their own efforts, yet no religion can progress unless it makes peace with God and God becomes its Helper. The progress of Muslims is linked with the progress of Islam. Unless Islam progresses, Muslims cannot advance, and there is no other route to success for them. Except the Ahmadies, all others are oblivious to this truth. On the one hand tens of millions of workers are needed to reconstruct the house of Islam, but on the other, we find that the workforce has gone on strike. Those who call themselves Muslims have excused themselves from this effort. We have only a few hundred thousand workers. Such a number would appear to be quite inadequate for carrying out even a fraction of the task at hand. In these circumstances obviously stupendous effort and hard work is needed.

It is strange that despite such extreme shortage of workers, even among the few that are available there are some who are relaxing and enjoying themselves. To such people I say that this is not the time to take it easy and to indulge in relaxation. This is the time for work. You have, many a time, made the commitment towards this task. I am reminding you of your past pledges and commitments. Success knocks at your doorstep–the same kind of success awaits you as was seen at the time of the Holy Prophet[saw]. He was once asked as to who was better, his companions or the companions of the Messiah? He replied that he did know. We are all aware of how the companions of the Holy Prophet[saw] were rewarded. You could be the recipients of the same kind of rewards. On the one hand the mercy and blessings of God are showering from the heavens but on the other, the deluge of fire also descends. It is up to you to position yourself under one or the other. Inside you should be such agitation that you are able to impress the hearts of others. This is a very difficult task and cannot be achieved unless one creates a profound change in oneself.

The Lahore Jama'at needs to pay particular attention to its responsibilities. After Qadian, it is our most important center. It is much frequented by people and in that way it has a special role to play in the propagation of Islam. But I see many weaknesses in this Jama'at. It is not on account of lack of sincerity of its members. Most of your membership is sincere and committed. But the problem is due to lack of cohesion in your efforts. Rather than working separately you need to work together pulling in the same direction. So I urge you to purify yourselves and then to fully understand your responsibilities. Once you address your responsibilities then consider it a given that the gates of heavenly rewards have opened for you. May Allah enable you to strive much in the service of Islam and Ahmadiyyat.

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THE HOLY QUR'AN

The Qur'an is filled with deep points of wisdom. In all its teachings and in its instructions with regard to true virtue it goes beyond the Bible. The lamp for beholding the true and unchangeable God is in the hand of the Qur'an. Had the Qur'an not come, God knows how many creatures might have been worshipped in the world. So all praise is due to God that the Unity of God which had disappeared from the world, has been re-established by the Qur'an.

[Tohfah Qaisariyyah, Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 12, p.282]

A RESPONSE TO BRUCE TEFFT

REPELLING CALUMNY AGAINST THE QUR'AN

Mujeeb ur Rahman,
Advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan

On 10th and 11th November 2006, a symposium was held in Las Vegas, Nevada, US under the auspices of "America's Truth Forum". It was titled "Understanding the Threat of Radical Islamist Terrorism". The declared purpose of the conference was to find out ways and means to counter the Islamic extremism. A senior journalist/ columnist from Pakistan attended this symposium and has recently written a column reporting how truth was violated, desecrated and outraged at the "America's Truth Forum".

Dr. Bruce Tefft, formerly of the American C.I.A and presently an advisor to the New York police, was one of the speakers at the symposium. Although the text of Dr. Tefft's remarks isn't available, he is reported to have said that The Qur'an encourages Muslims to lie, instead of speaking the truth. In particular he has referred to the term "*Taqiyya*" without understanding its background, meaning or implications. His latest utterances are in keeping with his oft-expressed views about Islam and its followers. In an earlier symposium convened by America's Truth Forum last April in Virginia he remarked, "40% of the Qur'an is gibberish, the rest is contradictory." Dr. Tefft obviously needs to acquire some basic information about the Qur'an and Islam. The above statement either proceeds from rank ignorance or it is a stark and blatant calculated lie. One can only hope that the intelligent and sober-minded American public will not be influenced by such remarks. These observations call for a serious reappraisal of the state of affairs and taking stock of attitudes.

In mid 1920s Professor Thomas Arnold lamented the ignorance and prejudice of the Christian world of the middle ages about the Muslims, regarding the false information provided to Pope Innocent III when he wanted to know about the Muslim world, their beliefs, and way of life. Montgomery Watt, made the following observation in the mid 1950s,

> "Even before the Crusades focused attention on the expulsion of the Saracens from the Holy Land, medieval war propaganda, free from the restraints of factuality, was building up a conception of, 'the great enemy'. At one point Muhammad was transformed into Mahound, the prince of darkness. By the twelfth century the ideas about Islam and Muslims current in the crusading armies

were such travesties that they had a bad effect on the morale. The Crusaders had been lead to expect the worst of their enemies, and when they found many chivalrous knights among them, they were filled with distrust for the authorities of their own religion."

Contemporary historian Karen Armstrong observes:

"On the eve of the second Christian millennium the crusaders massacred some 30,000 Jews and Muslims in Jerusalem, turning the thriving Islamic holy city into a stinking charnel house. For at least five months the valleys and ditches around the city were filled with putrifying corpses, which were too numerous for the small number of crusaders, who remained behind after the expedition to clear away, and a stench hung over Jerusalem, where the three religions of Abraham had been able to co-exist in relative harmony under Islamic rule for nearly 500 years."

"Ever since the crusades, the people of western Christendom developed a stereotypical and distorted image of Islam, which they regarded as the enemy of decent civilization."

"It was for example, during the crusades, when it was Christians who instigated a series of brutal holy wars against the Muslim world, that Islam was described by the learned scholar monks of Europe as an inherently violent and intolerant faith, which had only been able to establish itself by the sword, the myth of the supposed fanatical intolerance of Islam has become one of the perceived ideas of the west."

(Islam A Short History; pp 152 & 153)

It is apparent that some enlightened and informed Christian scholars from the Western world have tried to correct the picture to some extent. However it is not a good omen and may not auger well for inter-religious understanding and indeed for world peace that people like Dr. Tefft continue to spread the gospel of hatred, and attribute such offensive teachings to one of the major religions of the world. These travesties are bound in due course to create a greater mistrust among the western intelligentsia against their own political leaders when they realize that they have been duped into Muslim hatred by the political war machine trying to find excuses for their own misguided policies.

Tefft's observations are an outrageous calumny against the Qur'an which is the religious scripture believed by all Muslims around the world to be divinely revealed. Muslims all over the world respect and love every word of it and yearn to mould their lives in accordance with its teachings. The beauty, majesty and the style of Qur'an has drawn admiration among others from some western and Christian scholars who have not found the Qur'an to be "gibberish". Instead they have found it profound and full of meaning and wisdoms. Mr. Sale in his preliminary discourse remarks:

"The style of the Qur'an is generally beautiful and fluent … and in many places especially, where the majesty and attributes of God are described, sublime and magnificent."

Rev. Bosworth Smith writes:

> "The Qur'an is reverenced by a large section of the human race as a miracle of purity of style, of wisdom and of truth."

and says:

> "It is the one miracle claimed by Muhammad—his 'Standing Miracle' he called it, and miracle indeed it is."

Professor Palmer in his introduction to the Qur'an remarks:

> "That the best of Arab writers has never succeeded in producing anything equal in merit to the Qur'an it self is not surprising."
>
> (Dictionary of Islam by Hughes under the word Qur'an)

Sir William Muir says:

> "The Qur'an abounds with arguments drawn from nature and Providence, with a view to prove the existence of God as the Supreme Ruler and enforce His sovereign claim on the obedience and gratitude of mankind".

Further,

> "There is probable in the world, no other work which has remained 13 centuries with a pure text.

As for the powerful and convincing style of the Qur'an this is what Dr. Steingass has to say:

> "Here, therefore, it's merit as a literary production should, perhaps, not be measured by some preconceived maxims of subjective and aesthetic taste, but by the effects which it produced in Mohammed's contemporaries and fellow-countrymen. If it spoke so powerfully and convincingly to the hearts of his hearers as to weld hitherto centrifugal and antagonistic elements into one compact and well organized body, animated by ideas far beyond those, which had until now ruled the Arabian mind then its eloquence was perfect, simply because it created a civilized nation out of savage tribes, and shot a fresh woof into the old warp of history."
>
> Dictionary of Islam Art. Qur'an)

These scholars are not too friendly critics of the Qur'an but could not help making these observations during the course of professedly objective critical analysis.

The Holy Qur'an addresses the whole of mankind at all levels in all ages. It sponsors the basic values and raises a man from his physical conditions to a moral state and spiritual heights. It transforms beasts into human beings, human beings into moral beings, and moral beings into spiritual beings. In this process, the Qur'an does not stop at merely providing a list of dos and don'ts. It addresses the natural impulses, fears and hopes of man as an individual and prepares him for his struggle against social inhibitions and pressures and warns him of the ups and downs and the pitfalls he is to encounter in this struggle.

When we look at the teachings of the Qur'an about the faculty of speech we find that the ability of expression has been enumerated as a divine bounty and grace. According to the Qur'an man has not earned this faculty, it has been bestowed on him. It reminds

us that, the Gracious God has "created man and taught him plain speech (Ch;55 Vs 4, 5) .

And

"Have We not given him two eyes and a tongue and two lips". And "We have pointed out to him the two highways of good and evil" (Ch :90 Vs:9,10,11).

The two highways of good and evil; i.e. those of truth and falsehood; and of spiritual and material progress, God has provided man with all those means by which he can find the right path and can sift truth from falsehood. With this reminder and having confronted man with these basic facts, the Qur'an reminds him that he shall be held to account for the use of his faculties and potentials. "This day We shall put a seal on their mouths and their hands will speak to Us and their feet will bear witness to what they had earned." (Ch:36 VS:66).

A remarkable expression which brings to mind our present day inventions of movies and television whereby the limbs of man bear witness against him. It further holds out a reminder that on the day of judgment "their tongues and their hands and their feet will bear witness against them as to what they used to do" (Ch:24 VS:25)

The Qur'an reminds us that all our doings, utterances, sounds and our movements, are being recorded and shall be preserved. There is no escape from the consequences of our words and deeds. The Qur'an thus drives home the concept of accountability. It holds out an admonition and says "And follow not that of which thou hast no knowledge. Verily, the ear and eye and the heart – all these shall be called to account." (Ch:17 VS:37).

The Qur'an further reminds us "And assuredly, We have created man and We know what his mind whispers to him and We are nearer to him than even his jugular vein" (Ch:50 VS:17) and also that "He utters not a word but there is by him a guardian angel ready to record it" (Ch :50 Vs:19)

"And if thou speakest aloud, He hears it and also if thou speakest in a low voice, for He knows the secret thoughts of man and what is yet more hidden" (Ch:20 Vs:8)

He is the knower of the unseen and the seen, and that "He among you who utters his words secretly and he who utters them openly are equal in his knowledge." (Ch:13 Vs:10,11).

"And wether you conceal what you say or you say it openly he knows well all and that which is in your hearts." (Ch:67 Vs:14).

"Verily he knows what is spoken openly and he knows that which you hide." (Ch:21 Vs:111).

It is with this consciousness of accountability that the Qur'an provides guidance about how to use the faculty of speech. It shows us the avenues of truth and points out the evils of falsehood and enjoins upon us to be truthful, be in the company of the truthful and be true to our words and deeds, and admonishes and prohibits us from falsehood, lies, inaccurate statements, and admonishes us to shun falsehood in all its shades.

"O ye who believe! Why do you say what you do not? It is most hateful in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not." (Ch: 61 Vs 3 & 4)

According to the Qur'an the spiritual consequence of lying is that one is deprived of divine guidance. The Qur'an says: "Surely Allah guides not him who is an ungrateful liar." (Ch: 39 Vs 4)

And says:

"Certainly Allah guides not one who exceeds the bounds and is a great liar". (Ch: 40 Vs 29).

The Qur'an holds out an admonition and says: "Shun therefore, the abomination of idols, and shun all words of untruth." (Ch: 22 Vs 31).

In this verse falsehood has been described as an abomination like idolatry itself, because falsehood proceeds from fear of one kind or the other while a true believer should fear Allah alone. The Qur'an warns the liars and says, "And for them is a grievous punishment because they lied." (Ch: 2 Vs 11) Woe to every sinful liar. (Ch: 45 Vs 8).

The true character of a person is revealed when one is called upon to bear witness to something. The Qur'an describes the believers as, "those who bear not false witness and when they pass by anything vain, they pass by with dignity." (Ch:25 Vs 73).

On such occasions one may be vulnerable to either not to speak the whole truth or add something to it. The Qur'an warns against such proclivities and says, "And confound not truth with falsehood nor hide the truth knowingly." .(Ch: 2 Vs 43) …… And hide not testimony; and whoever hides it, his heart is certainly sinful. And Allah is Well-aware of what you do." (Ch: 2 Vs 284)

The highest ideals and aspirations of human existence find expression in paradise in the life after death. The climax of human existence is a living, wherein, "They will hear no vain discourse nor lying. (Ch: 78 Vs 36)

The Qur'an has comprehensively covered all shades of falsehood and has used various expressions to convey that lying should not be resorted to under any circumstances. According to the Qur'an even proximity to falsehood should be avoided. Misstatements, deviations, prevarication, embellishment of statements, mixing of falsehood, even making a true statement with a slight twist and equivocation, taking a stand without knowledge, saying something without meaning it have all been prohibited. In the Qur'an, lying has been likened to filth and idolatry. In short, all shades of falsehood have been specifically prohibited and its consequences upon the moral and psychological development of the human character have been pointed out. Dealing with different shades of falsehood, the Qur'an uses different expressions and words in the verses referred above. One such word used by the Qur'an is *'Zoor'*. It has been translated as falsehood. Traced to its roots the word also means to decline and turn away. It also covers adjusting and correcting a thing so as to embellish it. When used in relation to testimony it means embellishing the testimony and thereby making it void. It also means embellishing the speech. It also means stigmatizing ones self by imputation. A place or places in which lies are told or where people sit to entertain themselves by frivolous or vain diversion is also known as *Zoor*. Another word used to describe falsehood is *'Kizb'*, which means to utter a falsehood, to say what is untrue and to give an untrue account of a thing, whether intentionally or unintentionally. It also

means fiction or a fable. The *kizb* is of five kinds,

(a) the relater altering what he hears or relating as from others what he does not know;
(b) the saying which resembles a lie, not meaning anything but the truth;
(c) the saying of what is untrue by mistake;
(d) the findings of ones hopes, vain or false and
(e) the act of instigating. Yet another word used to describe falsehood is *'Ifk'*.

Traced to its roots it means:

(1) change ones state or condition,
(2) turning away from a thing
(3) change or pervert ones judgment or opinion
(4) to deceive or beguile and
(5) to fabricate. A further expression is *'Talbees'*, which is a derivative of *Libas*, meaning that which covers.

The *Sunnah* i.e. the precepts and practices of the Holy Founder of Islam[saw] occupy a very high place in the Muslim jurisprudence and provide an excellent model for individual Muslims to follow. His words and deeds are acknowledged as the living exposition and interpretation of the Qur'anic teachings.

He[saw] was constantly watchful and warned his people against the evils of falsehood.

A few of his traditions are given here as an example:

"The tongue that speaks the falsehood commits a grievous wrong." (*Kanz ul Ummal* 8203)

"Shun falsehood because it leads you astray from the right path which in turn leads to the fire of hell." (*Tibrani Kabir*).

"Falsehood is one of the gates of hypocrisy and double standards." (*Kanz ul Ummal* 8218)

"Stay away from falsehood because it leads you astray." (*Kanz ul Ummal* 8206)

"Falsehood is not permitted wether in earnest or in jest." (*Kanz ul Ummal* 8217)

"Woe to the man who speaks falsehood just to entertain people." (*Kanz ul Ummal* 8215)

"One who passes on all that he hears without verification is also a liar" (*Kanz ul Ummal* 8208, 8209)

In view of these numerous verses of the Qur'an and precepts of the Prophet[saw] to say that the Qur'an enjoins or encourages telling lies, is a grievous calumny and the unkindest cut of all on the body of Islam.

On the other hand the Qur'an lays great emphasis on the truthfulness and enjoins the believers thus,

"O ye who believe, keep your duty to Allah and be with the truthful." (Chapter: 9 Vs 119).

Indeed so great is the emphasis on truth that it enjoins adherence to truth, even against one's own interest and says, "O ye, who believe, be strict in observing justice, and be witnesses for Allah, even though it be against your selves or against your parents or kindred…..whether he be rich or poor Allah has a better right over them both. Therefore follow not your low desires that you may be able to act equitably. And if you distort or evade truth then Allah is Well-aware of what you do." (Ch: 4 Vs 136).

Even hatred and acrimony towards a people is

way of justice and truth.

The Qur'an says:

"O ye who believe, be upright for Allah, bearers of witness with justice; and not a peoples enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And keep your duty to Allah for Allah is aware of what you do." (Ch 5 Vs 10),

The Qur'an says:

"that Allah may question the truthful for their truth and He has prepared for the disbelievers a painful chastisement."(Ch: 33 Verse 9).

About the Day of Judgment the Qur'an says:

"Allah will say: this is a day when truth will profit the truthful ones, for them are gardens wherein flow rivers; therein shall they abide forever. Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him; that indeed is the mighty achievement." (Ch: 5 Vs 120).

Then again:

"That Allah may reward the truthful for their truth and punish the hypocrites if he so pleases or turn to them in mercy. Surely Allah is Ever Forgiving and Merciful." (Ch: 33 Vs 25)

Then again the Qur'an says:

"O ye who believe keep your duty to Allah and speak the straight forward words; He will put your deeds in to a right state for you and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and his Messenger he indeed achieves a mighty success." (Ch: 33 Vs 72).

Merely speaking the truth is not enough. Truth should be straight, without any twist.

Reference was made to *Taqiyya*, without understanding its meaning and significance. Tefft has referred to *Taqiyya* as if it was a license to lie. It is only fair that what is attributed to the Qur'an should be quoted from the Qur'an itself. Tefft has attributed *Taqiyya* to Qur'an without quoting the text. Only some prevailing misguided notions have been made the basis of the allegations without reference to their origin or any source material. The teachings of the Qur'an are those which we find in the Qur'anic text and not the gloss put over it. The Qur'an means Qur'anic text and not any analogies or deductions made there from.

The fact of the matter is that the *Taqiyya* is not a permission to lie or speak the falsehood. The doctrine implies that when one's life or faith is in danger one may not express one's faith and may opt to remain silent rather than lying about it. This doctrine has never been permitted in day-to-day dealings, or transactions. It was devised during the Umayyad and Abbasid period, when the followers of a particular faith were being assassinated on a large scale and were being subjected to state terrorism and not merely life but the very faith was threatened with extinction. In America where the law enforcement agencies are bound under the law to remind even the ordinary street criminals of their *"right to remain silent,"* the option to remain silent for a higher purpose should not be hard to understand. Indeed it is easy to understand that the motives behind spreading such disinformation regarding the doctrine of *Taqiyya* which is an exception and not a rule, are highly questionable.

It is clear that Dr. Tefft

and others like him do not have the basic knowledge about the Qur'an. Sheer ignorance and prejudice is being used by these people to create hate literature, which is no service to inter religious dialogue or world peace. To attribute wrong teachings to the Qur'an can only mean tarnishing and condemning the Muslim Faith. This outrageous assault on a faith needs to be widely condemned as it violates the UN Charter and internationally recognized human right. "America's *Truth* Forum" is spreading hatred against Muslims and in this campaign, *truth* is the first casualty. Sober-minded people and the civil society will do well to keep a watch on these gospels of hatred.

****

The Winning Hearts

Maria Ambalada

This is what Prophet Muhammad, Peace be upon him, knows

For every Muslim life taken

Thousands of hearts open

And for every drop of Muslim blood

Thousands more of loving heart awaits.

For every drop of Mother tears

Thousand more of us arise

And for every beads of mourning prayers

Thousands of laughters come from heaven.

Hark and sing aloud my brothers, my sisters

We are all but one now...

Waste not a drop for the salt in it is

As Universal as Allah.…

****

The Holy Qur'an brings full accord between Science and Religion

The Holy Qur'an is a Book so full of wisdom that it has brought out the accord between the principles of spiritual medicine, that is to say, the principles of religion which are truly spiritual medicine, and physical medicine, and this accord is so fine that it opens the doors of hundreds of insights and verities. It is only that person who can interpret the Holy Qur'an truly and perfectly, who ponders the principles laid down by the Holy Qur'an in the light of the system of physical medicine. On one occasion I was shown in a vision some books of expert physicians which contained a discussion of the principles of physical medicine, among which was included the book of the expert Physician Qarshi, and it was indicated to me that these Books contained a commentary on the Holy Qur'an. This shows that there is a deep relationship between the science of bodies and the science of religion and that they confirm each other. When I looked at the Holy Qur'an, keeping in mind the books that dealt with physical medicine, I discovered that the Holy Qur'an sets out in an excellent manner the principles of physical medicine.

(Chashma Ma'rifat, Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 23, pp. 102-103)

Answer to Four Questions Raised by Mr. John Rankin

in "the Nutley Sun" of September 28th, 2006 Under the Caption,

"Is Islam Willing to Embrace the Tough Questions?"

I.H. Kauser
Imam, Baitul Tahir, Brooklyn, NY

First Question

Is Islam willing to embrace hard questions from non Muslims?

The answer is "Yes." Your first reference from the Holy Qur'an 29:36 is not about the subject matter you have raised in your Question #1. English rendering of the said verse is as follows:

> *"And to Median We sent their brother Shu'aib (Jethro) who said, 'O my people, worship Allah, and be mindful of the Last day and commit not iniquity in the earth, creating disorder.'" (29:36)*

This verse does not address any restriction on non Muslims who ask questions of Muslims. Neither is it related to the freedom of speech. It is regarding the people of "Median" who are being exhorted by the Prophet "Shu'aib" (Jethro) to worship Almighty God, Allah.

May be the verse (closest to the subject) you have in your mind is the verse 29:47. If that is correct then the translation of the verse is as follows:

> "And argue not with the People of the Book except with what is best as an argument, *but argue not at all* with such of them as are unjust. And say, we believe in that which has been revealed to us and that which has been revealed to you; and our God and your God is One (*the same*); and to Him we submit."

First: In this verse Muslims have been advised by Almighty God that they should argue with Jews and Christians (People of the Book) **in the best manner.** And it is excellent advice which has been given to them by Almighty God.

Second: It is obvious from the verse that it is not commanding Muslims to shy away from dialogue with just and pious Jews and the Christians (People of the Book). However, it warns the Muslims not to enter into discussion with people of the book who are unjust and aim at ridiculing and mocking only.

They may belittle the Holy Qur'an and The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw]. A

non-biased person cannot raise any objection against this verse of the Holy Qur'an.

The second verse you have referred to from the Holy Qur'an is 33:36 which is as follows: -

> "And it behooves not a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah (Almighty God) and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should exercise *their* own choice in the matter concerning them. And whoso disobeys Allah and His Messenger, surely, strays away in manifest error." (33:36)

This verse has nothing to do with questioning by non Muslims to Muslims.

It addresses Muslims only and stops them from doing any thing contrary to a subject matter which has finally been decided by God Almighty and the Holy Prophet[saw].

Then you have quoted a Hadith (Saying of the Holy Prophet) from "Al-Bukhari" Vol. 1, # 63 in which Muhammad says to a man who approached him:

> *"I am here to answer your questions." The man says, "I want to ask you something and will be very hard in questioning. So do not get angry." Muhammad replies, "ask whatever you want."*

It is better to quote the complete Hadith then the matter becomes crystal clear. The complete Hadith is as follows:

> Narrated Anas bin Malik: "While we were sitting with the Prophet in the mosque, a man came riding on a camel. He made his camel kneel down in the mosque, tied its forelegs and then said, "Who amongst you is Muhammad? At that time the Prophet was sitting amongst us (his companions) leaning on his arm. We replied, 'This white man reclining on his arm.' The man then addressed him, 'O son of Abdul Muttalib!' The Prophet said, 'I am here to answer your questions.' The man said to the Prophet, 'I want to ask you something and will be hard in questioning. So do not get angry.' The Prophet said, 'Ask whatever you want.' The man said, 'I ask you by your Lord, and the Lord of those who came before you, has Allah sent you as an Apostle (Messenger) to all mankind?' The Prophet replied, 'By Allah, yes.' The man further said, 'I ask you by Allah. Has Allah ordered you to offer five prayers in a day and night?.' The Prophet replied, 'By Allah, Yes.' The man further said, 'I ask you by Allah! Has Allah ordered you to observe fasts during this month of the year (*Ramadhan*)?' He replied, 'By Allah, Yes.' The man further said, 'Has Allah ordered you to take *Zakat* from our rich people and distribute it amongst our poor people?' The Prophet replied, 'By Allah, Yes.' There upon the man said, 'I believe in all that which you have been sent, and I have been sent by my people as a Messenger, and I am Dimam Bin Th'alba from the brothers (tribe) of Bani Sa'd Bin Bakr.' "

(Ref: Hadith Vol. 1 No 63)

Explanation:

In this Hadith, **a non-Muslim** comes to see the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] who had all sorts of questions in his mind about Islam. He had a sitting with the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] in which the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] kept answering his questions until and unless all his

questions were answered. He became fully satisfied and accepted Islam whole heartedly. At no place did the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stop this non- Muslim from asking questions.

You have quoted a second Hadith from Vol. 3, No. 591, in which Muhammad says that:

> "Allah (God) hates for Muslims "to ask too many questions (in disputed religious matters)."

First of all, there is no contradiction in the two Ahadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] quoted by you. The first Hadith was about **non-Muslims** and the second one is concerning **Muslims.**

Let us see the complete Hadith then one will be able to comprehend the background under which these instructions are given. The sole aim of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] was to guide Muslims to create the best society.

The Hadith Vol. 3 No. 591 is as follows:

> Narrated Al-Mughira Bin Shu'ba, "The Prophet said, "Allah has forbidden for you to:
>
> (1) be undutiful to your mothers,
> (2) to bury your daughters alive,
> (3) to not pay the rights of the others (e.g. charity) and
> (4) to beg of men (begging).
>
> And Allah (didn't like) has hated for you,
>
> (1) vain, useless talk or that you talk too much about others,
> (2) to ask too many questions (in disputed religious matters) and
> (3) to waste the wealth (by extravagance)."

Asking questions unnecessarily, repeating the questions, useless reasoning without any logic and wisdom shows a kind of disrespectful behavior. Just like a teacher always welcome questions from his students but does not like questions just for sake of argument. In the same way, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] of Islam came to teach manners, and he advised his followers, not to ask unnecessary questions.

Asking questions was always appreciated by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] . The Holy Prophet Muhammad has never forbidden any one from asking questions, rather he always encouraged them.

As the Holy Prophet of Islam[saw] said: -

"A Good Question is Half of the Knowledge."

> "The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] said' "Moderation in spending is half of the economy. Love and kindness towards people is half of the wisdom, asking a good question is half of the knowledge."
>
> *(Baihaiqee fi Shua'bil Eemaan), (Mishkat-Bab Alhazar–e-Wattani fil Umoor page 430)*

There are numerous books of Ahadith (sayings of the Holy Prophet[saw]) in thousands of pages (recorded hundred of thousands of his sayings) most of them are based on questions answered by him. There is no Prophet (like him) in the history of mankind who answered so many questions. These answers have been recorded in the books of "Ahadith", which fully refute the allegation that Islam prohibits asking questions.

Islam has a satisfactory answer for every question, no matter how complex or tough.

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community invites questions regarding Islam and will answer them to your satisfaction.

Second Question

Is Islam strong enough to handle freedom?

Yes---- Islam is strong enough to handle freedom.

As per the Holy Qur'an, "There is no compulsion in Religion."

You have mentioned that this verse was revealed when the Holy Prophet[saw] was being persecuted by the polytheists. This is not correct as this verse was revealed to the Holy Prophet[saw] in Medina (not in Mecca). So you cannot say that when the Holy Prophet[saw] gained the power he changed his saying from freedom to "*Jihad*". But in fact the teaching *"there is no compulsion in Religion"* is forever.

You said that ***from the very beginning of Islam, non-Muslims were offered options–Conversion, slavery or death."***

In the beginning, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] and his companions were being persecuted in Mecca for 13 long years. It was so much that they migrated from Mecca to Medina. Even then the enemies did not leave them in peace, rather they kept attacking the innocent Muslims with large armies in Medina. Then God did permit them to fight in self defense.

. *And you have accepted that the word "Jihad" means "struggle".*

Let me explain to you the true meanings and the true concept of *Jihad.*

The word ***Jihad*** is being misconstrued everywhere especially by the media. *Jihad* is the Arabic word, which means "the struggle."

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] described three kinds of *Jihad*.

(1) **The Greatest *Jihad*:**

To fight against ones own evil wishes.

(2) **The Great *Jihad*:**

To spread peace in the world through he teachings of the Holy Qur'an.

(3) The Lesser *Jihad*: to fight in self defense only

The Holy Qur'an says:

"Permission to fight is given to those against whom war is made, and because they have been wronged. And Allah indeed has power to help them. (22:40)

The Arabic word "*Ozena*" in this verse means 'permitted' and "*Allazeena Yoqataloona*" means 'those who have been attacked.'

"*Yoqataloona*" is a passive word which means 'against whom the sword has already been used.'

The second condition is: "*Be Annahum Zolemoo*" means 'they have been persecuted, too.

Under Islamic law, Muslims are allowed to fight in self-defense only. The Holy Prophet[saw] never attacked anyone, nor killed, or provoked anyone, rather he and his companions were always the target of attacks. He never taught his followers to kill anybody without adequate justification. God's teaching in the Holy Qur'an is:

"There is no compulsion in religion."(2:256)

This being the commandment of God, how can a true Muslim overpower his opponent and order him to either convert or become a slave or face death? Muslims have been in India and Spain for hundreds of years but they never converted them with a sword or coercion.

Even when war was permitted in self-defense, it was not a "green light" for Muslims, to do whatever they wanted. In time of armed conflict there were numerous conditions and prohibitions imposed upon the Muslims – so much so that they seemingly were often at a disadvantage in battle, compared with how their opponents were allowed to behave by their rules of conduct in war. The Geneva Convention rule of fair conduct in war and kind treatment of prisoners was created only in the 20th century. The Muslims were obeying even more stringent conditions of fair conduct and kind treatment of their prisoners 1400 years before the advent of our Western 'civilized' codes of conduct in war.

The famous novelist James A. Michener writes about the lasting influence of Muhammad[saw] in his Readers Digest article of 1955, "Islam: the Misunderstood Religion."

In it Michener writes:

"As a successful general, Muhammad left many traditions regarding decent conduct in war. Muhammad taught his followers, saying: *'Faithfully carry out all covenants and agreements. Avoid treachery and do not disfigure the enemy dead. Do not slay children, women, old men, and persons dedicated to the service of religion. Do not destroy sacred objects, orchards, or crops.' "*

So please remember that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] and his companions fought only when they had no choice but to defend themselves.

When Muslims conquered Mecca without any bloodshed, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] announced general amnesty to all Meccans who were involved in persecution for almost 21 years and pardoned them all. It never happened in the history of Islam that non Muslims had been given (as you mentioned) three options: "conversion, slavery or death." Not even at the victory over Mecca.

It is a great favor of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] on humanity the way he abolished slavery from the world. He enforced lots of conditions on it and freed thousands of slaves during his lifetime and exhorted his followers as well to free the slaves. There is no such an example in the history of mankind.

In Islam conversion is not permitted through compulsion.

You have mentioned that, *"In Islamic Shari'a law, Muslims have no freedom to convert from Islam"*

You have already quoted the following verse of the Holy Qur'an: "There is no compulsion in Religion" (2:256).

It is very clear and does not need any clarification.

Beside this, there are quite a few verses in the Holy Qur'an which talk about the freedom of Religion.

The Holy Qur'an says:

"And say, It is the truth from your Lord; wherefore let him who will, believe, and let him who will, disbelieve. (18:29)

Those who believe, then disbelieve, then again believe, then disbelieve, and then increase in disbelief, Allah will never forgive them….. (4:137)"

"O ye who believe! Whoso among you turns back from his religion, then let him know that Allah will soon bring in his stead people whom He loves." (5: 53)

"He who turns back on his heels shall not harm Allah at all" (3:144)

"If they turn away, say, Allah is sufficient for me. There is no God but He. In Him do I put my trust, and He is the Lord of the mighty Throne." (9:128)

There are some other verses of the Holy Qur'an (2:217) (16:107) (3:87) (4:137) (5:54) which also deal with the right of conversion in Islam. Islam has given full freedom to believe or disbelieve. There is no compulsion in religion.

There is no compulsion in religion. Every Muslim was, and is, at liberty to denounce his faith and accept any other religion. However, this does not mean that the Muslims were apostatizing in numbers. Rather, the message of Islam was so appealing to the hearts that tribes after tribes embraced Islam and

stood firm on their faith till their last breath. Even at this age and time Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world as every commandment is based on irrefutable and sound rational.

Third Question

Is Islam, by definition, at war with all non-Muslims?

No - Islam is not at war with non Muslims

You have mentioned: "There are only two possibilities in Islam – *dar al-Islam* ("the state of Islam") or *dar al-harb* ("the state of war"). People live in one or the other.

Those who refuse to submit to Islam by definition are in "a state of war" against Islam. Do Muslims in the United States view all non-Muslims here the same way and hence subject to *Jihad*?

Explanation:

Let me present to you the back ground and history of this terminology.

"Dar al-Harb"

(lit, "the abode of war) Territories; where Islam does not prevail. During colonial rule in India, the '*Ulema*' (Muslim Clergymen) decided that as long as the laws of Islam were not prohibited, or as long as the peculiar institution of Islam existed, the country could be considered to lie within "*dar al-Islam*" (abode of Islam). Symbolically, the "*dar al-harb" is t*he domain, even in an individual's life, where there is struggle, or opposition to, the will of God.

(The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam, page 93) by Prof: Huston Smith)

This terminology which you presented has nothing to with the teachings of the Holy Qur'an or the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] , but came in to being after hundreds of years in India where Muslims were in minority although they were the rulers. Some Muslim clergymen invented this terminology which is not being practiced at all. Plus it has nothing to do with fighting non Muslims as it describes that: -

"Even in an individual's life, where there is struggle, or opposition to the will of God."

No fighting or killing of non Muslims is mentioned in this terminology.

Islam does not permit any Muslim to kill others for no reason. The word "Islam" means peace.

There are **1.6 billion Muslims** in 186 countries of the world. In **69 countries** of the world Muslims are in majority. They believe in peace, love and affection.

In Spain and in India Muslims were the rulers for hundreds of years but they never compelled others to accept Islam or made them slaves. Rather Brotherhood, equality, love and respect had been practiced.

Fourth Question

Can Muslims in the United States fully affirm "unalienable rights" for all people equally?

Muslims in America affirm unalienable rights for all people equally. As it was mentioned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] .

In his Farewell address the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] said:

"O men! What I say to you, you must hear and re-

THE TREATMENT OF ORPHANS IN ISLAM

Naveed Malik, Chicago

The Holy Qur'an places great emphasis on the caring of orphans. Indeed, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was himself orphaned at the tender age of six, to be then raised by his grandfather and uncle in succession. It is moving to read the sayings of Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa[saw] concerning the treatment of both orphans and parents – mothers in particular – as he was never able to enjoy the love of his own father, nor that of his own mother beyond the sixth year of his life.

Qur'anic Treatment of Orphans

Considering the comprehensive nature of the Holy Qur'an, it should come as no surprise that it details the care of orphans, who – when left unprotected – are the most vulnerable and easily exploited section of humanity. For this reason, in one of the earliest Qur'anic revelations, God Almighty commands, "so the orphan, oppress not" (96:10).

The Qur'an also relates an occasion on which the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] questioned him as to the treatment of orphans. Accordingly, the Qur'an relates:

"And they ask thee concerning the orphans. Say, 'Promotion of their welfare is an act of great goodness. And if you intermix with them, they are your brethren. And Allah knows him who seeks to make mischief apart from him who seeks to promote the welfare of the orphans. And if Allah had so willed, He would have put you to hardship. Surely, Allah is Mighty and Wise." (2:221)

God Almighty teaches that the virtuous are those who, out of love for Him, feed the orphan. These virtuous men and women carry out this noble task, relates the Qur'an, all the while,

"Assuring them, 'We feed you to win Allah's pleasure only. We desire no reward nor thanks from you'." (76:6-10)

Inheritance Rights

In pre-Islamic Arabia – and indeed in most of the world – orphans had little or no formal rights. With the advent of Islam, legal rights of orphans were firmly established. Allah the Exalted includes both male and female children of the deceased amongst those who have the right to inherit wealth and property, proclaiming:

"For men is a share of that which parents and near relations leave; and for women is a share of that which parents and near relations leave, whether it be little or much – a determined share." (4:8).

In the next verse, Allah *ta'ala* goes to the extent of even encouraging the inclusion of unrelated orphans in the division of a deceased person's inheritance (4:9). Detailed allocation percentages are given in verses 12 and 13 of the same chapter.

Property Rights

While children are to

be allotted a portion of their deceased parents' property, in most cases they will be too young to properly (or legally) protect and manage their property. Allah, in His infinite wisdom, therefore includes further admonitions relating to the safeguarding of orphans' property. The Qur'an instructs:

"And give to the orphans their property and exchange not the bad for the good, and devour not their property by mixing it with your own. Surely it is a great sin." (4:3)

We read a similar mandate elsewhere in the Qur'an:

"And approach not the property of the orphan, except in a way which is best, till he attains his maturity. And give full measure and weigh with equity." (6:53)

This warning is repeated yet again in the Qur'an, where it is written:

"And come not near the property of the orphan, except in the best way, until he attains his maturity and fulfill the covenant; for the covenant shall be questioned about." (17:35)

From these three verses alone, Muslims are taught to hold and responsibly manage property belonging to orphans. Once the orphan reaches maturity, control of the property should be transferred to the orphan. Finally, Muslims are forewarned that their dealings with orphans are covenants before God, and ones which they will be questioned about in the hereafter. Devouring the wealth of orphans is termed "a great sin," and elsewhere it is written:

"Surely, they who devour the property of orphans unjustly, only swallow fire into their bellies, and they shall burn in a blazing fire." (4:11)

In no uncertain terms does God Almighty make it known that mistreatment of orphans and/or their property will lead the offender to burn in hell. However, guardians of orphans or "foster parents" are granted conditional permission to utilize a portion of said property in caring for the orphan(s), and if need be, for themselves. In light of the above noted verse of the Qur'an, however, guardians are clearly advised to exercise a great deal of caution in availing this permission. The Qur'an states:

"And test the understanding of the orphans until they attain the age of marriage, then, if you perceive in them mature judgment, deliver to them their property; and devour it not in extravagance and haste against their growing up. And whoso is rich, let him abstain; and whoso is poor, let him eat thereof with equity. And when you deliver them their property, then call witnesses in their presence. And Allah is sufficient as a Reckoner." (4:7)

This verse first teaches guardians to assess the ability of orphans to manage their own property upon attaining maturity. Then, only after a just guardian perceives "in them mature judgment" are they to hand over property. In case an orphan, having reached adulthood, is still unable to responsibly manage their property, the responsibility is retained by the guardian or another qualified individual (e.g., spouse or near relation).

While the rich are urged to altogether abstain from using the property or wealth of an orphan under their care, the poor are granted permission of equitable use, and even then only under strict conditions. God Almighty warns, "Devour it not in extravagance," meaning that use of property must not be for

any vain or luxurious purpose. This is further supported by the use of the word "eat" in the verse, "and whoso is poor, let him *eat* thereof with equity." Eating is a basic necessity and as such, it is understood that orphans' property should only be used in dire circumstances, in which the guardian cannot afford to purchase even basic necessities such as food.

Lastly, the verse provides guidance in the legal arena, calling for witnesses to record the rightful transference of property from guardian to ward.

Marriage Rights

Prior to the advent of Islam, orphans – especially girls – had very little in the way of rights concerning marriage. Indeed, women altogether were bereft of equitable treatment by their men, relegated to the status of chattel, confined to either harems or imposed celibacy, depending on their social status and previous life experiences. In its groundbreaking chapter, *Al-Nisa*, the Qur'an established numerous unprecedented rights for women, and orphans. The Qur'an relates:

"…And that which is recited to you elsewhere in the Book concerns the orphan girls whom you give not what is prescribed for them and whom you desire to marry, and also concerns the weak among children. And He enjoins you to deal equitably with the orphans. And whatever good you do, surely Allah knows it well." (4:128)

Commenting on this verse, Khalifatul Masih II, Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad[ra] writes:

"It was prohibited to Muslims to marry those orphan girls whose rights they could not adequately safeguard. [Khalifatun Nabi II, Hadhrat] Umar[ra], the Second Caliph would not allow the guardians of wealthy and handsome orphan girls to marry them and would insist on other and better husbands being found for them. The verse signifies that some instructions about women have already been given in the Qur'an and that other instructions follow." (Farid p. 218)

Indeed, guidance relating to the marriage of orphans had already been given earlier in the chapter. Verse four of Surah *Al-Nisa*, meaning 'woman', reads:

"And if you fear that you will not be just in dealing with the orphans, then marry of other women as may be agreeable to you…" (4:4)

The premise upon which this verse is founded is that permission is indeed granted to Muslims to marry from among the orphans. It then advises Muslims not to enter into the sacred contract of marriage with orphans if the fear they may deal with them unjustly.

By describing orphans as the "brethren" of Muslims, God Almighty raised their status in society. He did not stop there, further calling for the safeguarding of their rights and property, encouraging intermixing with them in society, and even marrying them. He made the promotion of their welfare "an act of great goodness" (2:221) and the abuse of their property "a great sin" (4:3).

The Holy Prophet[saw] on Orphans

Taken from *Wisdom of the Holy Prophet*, below are just a few *Ahadith* or sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] on orphans:

"Of your homes, the

one Allah likes best is the one in which an orphan has an honored place."

"I forbid you to trespass against the rights of two weak ones: orphans and women."

"He who brings up an orphan well, whether related to him or not, will be as close to me in Paradise as my first finger is close to the second."

(Khan, Pp. 21-22)

Appreciate Your Parents While There is Time

There's another lesson to be learned in the discussion of orphans; one which relates to parents. It is an inescapable fact that everyone's mother and father will die one day. The title of "orphan" is simply assigned to those whose parents die (or are permanently separated from them) when they are just children. It is part of human nature to take God's favors for granted, only until they are lost. Hence, those fortunate enough to still have their parents with them should make every effort to earn Allah's blessings through them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] advised:

"He, who desires that his days be lengthened and that his provision be expanded, should be nice to his parents and should join the ties of kinship." (Zirvi p. 150)

If a longer life and expanded provision are not incentive enough to serve one's parents, another tradition of the Prophet of Islam may provide additional perspective:

"Abu Huraira[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: 'May his nose be rubbed in dust (should be disgraced), may his nose be rubbed in dust, may his nose be rubbed in dust.' People asked the Holy Prophet[saw] 'Who is such a person?' The Holy Prophet[saw] said, 'Anyone who found his parents, one or both, approaching old age and did not enter Paradise through serving them'."

(Zirvi p. 152)

Orphans in America

According to the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, almost 3,000,000 children in the US do not have – or do not live with their – parents. Muslims in America should pay heed to this tremendous potential for earning Allah's blessings. Volunteer opportunities are abundant at orphanages, or group homes as they are commonly referred to these days. For example, established in 1899, the Association House of Chicago is one of the oldest US organizations serving orphans and other less fortunate children in its local community. They welcome volunteers to teach computer skills, manage games and activities, and participate in painting and other arts and crafts at the House. Another way to support such institutions is to give of your own property. The Association House and similar organizations across America welcome donations of clothing, supplies, and of course, cash.

Above all else, it is the morally upright guidance that a Muslim can provide to an American orphan which is most sorely needed in today's society. In the interest of brevity, we shall not delve into the disturbing statistics of income, crime, family relationships, etc. of American orphans reaching adulthood. Needless to say, one of the greatest needs that directors of orphanages cite is mentors.

Be that mentor

In addition to giving

of your time in youth group homes in America, consider donating to *Darul Yatama* or the Orphan House charity fund. Proceeds from member donations are used by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community to provide care for orphans in less fortunate countries of the world.

In the end, all praise is due to Allah, Lord of Honor and Glory, Who in His infinite wisdom raised an orphan to the highest rank in humanity, our master, Khataman Nabiyyeen Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa[saw]. May Allah the Exalted enable and inspire Muslims worldwide to earn His love and the intercession of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] by promoting the welfare of orphans, Aameen. ◆

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THE CALL OF KHALIFATUL MASIH V[aba] FOR THE EAGER VOTARIES

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih's[aba] call in his own words:

"It is my ardent desire. I want to appeal earnestly that for the purification of your lives and the lives of your descendants join this heavenly scheme. Come forward, there should be fifteen thousand new *Wasaya* within this year. So that we can claim fifty thousand *Wasaya* within this centenary…

It is my ardent desire that in the year 2008 on the centenary of the establishment of Khilafat in Jama'at Ahmadiyya (Insha Allah), there should be at least 50% of the subscribers (Chanda paying) from among the earning member of every Jama'at of every country of the world who would have joined in this grand system of Hadhrat Promised Messiah[as] and would have arisen to such high standards of spirituality and sacrifices. This would be a modest offer to Allah the Almighty in thankfulness, which the Jama'at would be offering on the occasion of the centenary of Khilafat."

(Address of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] on the occasion of Jalsa Salana 2004 UK)

MUHAMMAD SADIQ

An Urban Sufi in America

Jalaluddin Abdul-Latif

I joined Ahmadiyyat through Muhammad Sadiq in May of 1972. At that time the New York Mission House was located atop a tavern on Archer Ave in Jamaica Queens. This was during the Khilafat of Hadhrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Third Successor of the Promised Messiah, and a grandson (may the peace and blessings of Almighty God, Allah be on all of them). After having administered those rites and until his death in 1996, Muhammad Sadiq had been my closest friend, mentor, confidante and inspiration. Not just for me but for my entire family. I saw his example of Islam as Islam in practice. Anyone who knew him will confirm that Muhammad Sadiq lived his faith. Islam/Ahmadiyyat and love of Khilafat shone on his face, in his actions and in his speech. Most of any conversation with him eventually wound up on Islam in some kind of way.

Shortly before I became initiated into the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, he had just returned from *Hajj*. It was during one of the early Jama'at meetings I had attended that he was relating his *Hajj* experiences. I'll never forget that presentation of his. Here I was, newly initiated and up to that time, I had had no prior connection with an organized community of Muslims. I had known Muslims before this time but never attended their services or a meeting of any kind. In fact I had never belonged to a group, and was not impressed by the people who were passing as Muslims in the New York area. The only difference between their behavior and mine was that they did not smile. It seems like the Ahmadies were the first Muslims I ever saw that actually smiled. Anyway, I was amazed at what he related that Sunday afternoon. My first thought was, "Is he for real?" He said while he was circumbambulating the *Ka'bah* during *Tawaf*, he was suddenly accosted by this large man dressed in black, and he started raining blow after blow on his head and shoulders, and yet he couldn't feel the effects of the blows. It was like he couldn't be harmed. He later said he asked a couple of his *Hajj* companions if they had seen this person beating him and no one had. I didn't know what to think when I heard this. I could see that he was serious about what he was saying and he didn't look like any one who habitually told tall tales, so I surmised that this was some sort of a vision he experienced. I later asked some older members about this and was told every individual experiences *Hajj* differently and they didn't seem at all surprised at what Muhammad Sadiq had experienced. Shortly afterwards I had read some books on *tasawuuf* and *Sufism*, etc. where spiritual people often experience things that can not be easily explained.

During this time I was working in mid-town Manhattan on a 4:00 pm to midnight shift, which I was lucky enough to spend most of my working years on to

be able to attend the *Jum-'uah* Prayers on Friday. The *Khutba* was usually given by him, or that other pillar of the New York/New Jersey Jama'at, Bashir Afzal. Those sermons were pure inspiration to me and my dear friend and brother who introduced me to Ahmadiyyat, Akbar T. Ahmadi, and we would talk about the sermons on the train ride back to Manhattan. I was so impressed with those two gentlemen's sermons. Muhammad Sadiq was educated, but Bashir Afzal was of an elementary education and was mainly self-taught and an avid reader of the Holy Qur'an and the long commentary. So much so that they didn't use prepared papers for their sermons. They would take a few verses of the Qur'an and off the top of their heads speak about the subject matter in relation to the present time or situation. I can remember Abid Haneef of the Boston Jama'at saying, "I think Bashir Afzal is a Hafiz of the Qur'an's English translation." Bashir Afzal could recite a long passage of the English translation and Muhammad Sadiq could recite it in Arabic, and then give you the English translation also. He always stressed it is most important to know the translation of the verses you recited in your prayers.

Muhammad Sadiq loved *Salat.* One could say he lived for the *Salat.* He totally immersed himself in his prayers. He told me when he made his *sunnah* or *nawafil raka'ats* until he could feel the Arabic, he would recite the Qur'anic verses in Arabic and English. And if he found his mind wandering in prayer, he would seek refuge in Allah and repeat the part over. He'd then make two *sajdas* afterwards because he said he felt that was a mistake. When we prayed together and we had *sunnah raka'ats* to make after the *Farz raka'ats*, I was always finished before him. He always extended his *ruku* and *sajdah*. By the time he had lost his sight, I would say he knew exactly what the Arabic words meant when he was saying them. He may not have been conversant in Arabic, but I think he was fluent in his *salat*. One of the children he took care of, Zubair, told me one time, "No matter what time of day I leave the house, and no matter what time of night I return, he's making *salat*"!

I think it might be appropriate to relate some of his early Pre-Islamic life here for the benefit of those who may not have had the privilege of knowing him, and if you were born in this country to perhaps get some inspiration from what I think were some great hurdles to overcome and reach the spiritual heights that I think he did. I will try my best to relate it as he told me over the years on different occasions.

I seem to remember he had a brother, and his father was abusive to the two boys, as well as the mother. His father was an alcoholic and his mother was one of the sweetest human beings you'd ever meet. His father passed away a long time ago, I imagine while Sadiq was young. His mother lived with him until she passed away sometime in the 1970's, I think. He was popular in school and played football and played trombone in the school band. Though he was short in stature he was tough enough to be good in the game of football. While he was still at home, and I believe out of High School, he ran off with a circus to play in their band, and that's how he launched his professional music career. Keep in mind this is during the 1920's and '30's that he's growing up in. Racism and segregation were part of the

American fabric then, and the Depression etc is going on in the North as well as the South. After his stint with the circus he returned home to Newark, NJ and played in night clubs with various groups until he landed a job in the Earl Hines Big Band. He later went to the Billy Eckstein Band and his friends and contemporaries were the great musicians of that time, which is now the 1940's, a time when big bands and so called jazz music was the rave all over the country and much of the world. I have some pictures of him performing and records of him playing in the Billy Eckstein band along with Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Art Blakey, Sarah Vaughn, Gene Ammons, Sonny Stitt, and Fats Navarro etc. He and J.J. Johnson used to run around together carrying their horns everywhere in case they got a chance to play somewhere. I don't want to get into a lot of detail about this era, suffice it to say he was by now a local celebrity in Newark, and was on the verge of a brilliant career. He had acquired a manager and was looking at the possibilities of singing also. He had a beautiful voice. Drug use was rampant and everybody wanted to offer it to the musicians just to be in their company. There were women who chased after them also. All this was part of his environment at this time. He told me he never indulged in drugs as many of his friends did and seeing the effects on them made him more able to not get involved.

Around this time I believe is when Sadiq's friend, the late Art Blakey one of the great drummers and contributors to the development of American music, introduced him to a brother named Talib Daood. Some may remember him from the Philadelphia Jama'at. He passed away a few years ago. It is from these two that he first started hearing abut Islam. Many of the musicians of that time were becoming Muslim, and I would think Talib Daood was probably the main influence of that. One evening Sadiq's friend, Art Blakey asked him to escort his wife down to the night club on 52nd street he was playing at. Sadiq goes by the Apartment to get Art's wife and she's not ready. She says "sit down and I'll be a few minutes, read this while you're waiting." She hands him 'The life of Muhammad[saw]' by Sufi Matiur Rahman Bengali. He said this was the turning point in my life. When Art's wife came out he was in tears. This, he said is not the Islam Art is telling him about. Muhammad Sadiq said it was then that he fell in love with Holy Prophet[saw].

After this introduction to the Holy Prophet[saw] he said his interest in the music began to fade. He said this change was phenomenal. Up to that point, he told me, the music, his horn, his career was his life. When he told his friends he was giving up the music, Art Blakey said to him "Man, you don't have to give up the music to be a Muslim." Sadiq said " I know, but I do. I'm not strong enough to do both." And with that Muhammad Sadiq walked away from the only life he'd known and embarked on a journey that literally took him from darkness into the *Noor*, the light. When he acquired a Holy Qur'an one of the first things he saw when he opened it was the verse 104 of *Sura A-e-'Imran*: which includes the words; "and you were on the brink of a pit of fire and He saved you from it". He saw this as a great sign and said he could never go back to that life and he never did. He told me after he became an Ahmadi he never missed the music. From the time of his pre-teen years to what is

now about 1946, music was his life until he signed a *Bai'at* form.

He worked at different jobs until he landed a job as a painter for the city of Newark, NJ. I remember laughing when he told me he painted some of the bridges around Newark. The image of him hanging from a scaffold on a bridge over one of those rivers was not something you'd expect to see him doing. He eventually wound up working for the city's housing dept and painted the flats and hallways in the projects of public housing. He tried going back to school to study engineering in college part time, but that took up to much of his time he wanted to spend with his family, as he and his wife had taken a couple of children to raise as I have mentioned, and he wanted to devote more time to his religious studies. He took some classes on Arabic for a while to learn how to read the Qur'an and that's the extent of his higher learning. He managed to save enough money to put down on the house on Renner Ave in Newark where he was living when he passed away.

The Ahmadiyya Movement was meeting in an apartment in Harlem at this time, as I remember being told. I am not sure of the exact location but I think it was around 116th street and I think they later had a place in the 130's in New York City. The late Muhammad Zafrulla Khan (May Allah continually bless him for the great service he has rendered to the English speaking world) used to attend their meetings and give *Jum'uah* sometimes when he was in the city at the Pakistan Foreign Mission. He told me that Zafrulla Khan's[ra] chauffeur asked, "Why do you want to go to such a part of the city as this? And Zafrulla Khan[ra] would answer "because as you would say, I want to be with my buddies". Abid Haneef of Boston, Mass. was part of the New York Jama'at then along with Yusef Lateef of the Boston Jama'at also. Muhammad Sadiq and Abid did a lot of *Tabligh* on the New York streets then, even getting harassed by the public and the police. They were even beaten and thrown in jail for their propagation in the midtown New York City area and had to make court appearances.

After the couple or so places in Manhattan, I think their next move was to the Jamaica Queens, NY location where I entered the Jama'at. We have to remember that Muhammad Sadiq and Bashir Afzal were both living in New Jersey at this time, Muhammad Sadiq in Newark NJ and Bashir Afzal in Montclair, N.J. These 2 gentlemen traveled about 30 miles each way with their families through New York City traffic for years to attend Jama'at meetings. There were Jama'at meetings every Sunday afternoon, *Jum'uah* every Friday and by the way, we the Khuddam, had meetings twice a week. During Ramadhan there were *Tarraveeh* prayers on the week ends and I do not remember those two missing any congregational prayers. Sadiq told me he would drive there, and sometimes it would only be his family and Bashir Afzal's that showed up. They would hold a meeting and drive back to New Jersey. That is the caliber of their dedication to the Jama'at. These two stalwarts of the faith, with the Grace of God, kept the New York Jama'at alive and functioning. May Almighty God give them a place of honor among His devoted servants in Paradise.

After 2 or 3 years or

Maulvi Muhammad Siddiq Shahid, as missionary of the area a house was purchased in Teaneck, New Jersey for a mission house, and Muhammad Sadiq was appointed the President of that Jama'at. I moved to Montclair New Jersey and became part of the New Jersey Jama'at. This is 1975 and the year I went to Rabwah and Qadian with Sadiq and Bashir. I was given some names by my other mentor Abdul Ghafoor Soofi former missionary of USA, of people to try and see while in Pakistan and India. During that wonderful visit to those places I feel I really got to see what Ahmadiyyat actually was. Those three gentle souls and that trip to Qadian and Rabwah is what cut me away from my former life and I thank Allah for giving me the opportunity to experience the trip and to know those dear people. I was at a funeral in St. Louis, Missouri over a year ago and was given some pictures by the daughter of the Jama'at President, Munir Ahmad, pictures of that trip in which Muhammad Sadiq, Ali Raza, another early member and pioneer of the Mid West Jama'ats, Bashir Afzal and I are in, that I hadn't seen. We all were there and I immediately was in tears when being brought back to those days.

I don't remember exactly when it was that Sadiq loss his sight, but the cause was glaucoma. He had a couple of operations at a clinic in New York City which I took him to a few times, and I think there was some error in a procedure that did permanent damage to his optic nerve and he was left totally blind. At first he was very upset about it, but soon was resigned to making the best of it. I had some experience with his condition as my late sister was blind from birth and us six brothers and her grew up together. So I felt an even more closeness to Muhammad Sadiq when this happened to him. I remember him saying that, "What Allah has given me since I lost my sight, I think I'd rather be blind then to give up what I've been given by Allah."

I would pick him up and take him shopping. Sometimes he and I, and Rashid Arshad who was my neighbor in Rahway, NJ at that time would all pile into my Volkswagen Beetle and we'd go shopping at the Indian/Pakistani grocers. I had a motorcycle and Sadiq said he would like to have a ride on it with me but my wife didn't like the idea and for that matter neither did she like the motorcycle. So I never got to take him for the ride. But he was game and wanted too. This reminds me of another one of our adventures. I happened to have bought a small ugly bronze-colored, used Datsun automobile and Sadiq and I were out driving one day and I was on his street on the way back to his house when the thing cut off about 6 or 7 blocks from his place. Now its just me and him and we're in the traffic lane so I says, "Sadiq you're going to have to take the wheel, and I am going to push. When I yell turn, you turn the wheel to the right so we can get around the corner out of this traffic lane." Sadiq breaks out in a big grin and says "OK! Great!" Soon as I get him settled behind the wheel and roll his window down and position my self behind the car to start pushing, two guys, going in the opposite direction stop and hop out of their car and say, "hold on we'll give you a hand." I explained that we were just pushing it around the corner. So they say, "fine." They start pushing and with all of us pushing that little car, I yell, "Turn Sadiq!", one of the guys looks at me as if to say, "What is he

yelling about." Sadiq turns, the car flies around the corner and before I can yell, "Straighten it out" they push the car into this big traffic control terminal box up on the curb. "BANG!!" One of the guys goes over to Sadiq and yells, "HEY MAN!! What is the matter with you? Are you blind or something? Can't you see that big thing sitting there?" Sadiq says, with his sweet soft voice; "well as a matter of fact sir, I am blind." The guy looks at Sadiq with this amazed look on his face and realizes he's telling the truth. Then he looks at me with his mouth still hanging open. I just shrugged my shoulders and he turns to his buddy and says " These guys are crazy, lets get out of here." I go around to the passenger side, get in next to Sadiq, and with the car still sitting up on the curb smashed against the traffic control box, we sit there and laugh for what must have been about 5 minutes. We laughed until tears were running down our faces. I told Sadiq, "You should have seen those guys faces when you said you were blind." Muhammad Sadiq had such a great sense of humor.

I had the great honor to be able to take Muhammad Sadiq and Bashir Afzal to the Mosque for meetings and *Jum'uah* and when I wasn't able too due to working in New York, my wife drove them. When we lived in The Bronx we were near my 3rd mentor Abdul Ghafoor Soofi who my wife drove to *Jum'uah* Prayers in Brooklyn on Union Street. As I mentioned before, these 3 blessed souls were all like fathers and best friends to me and my wife and like grandfathers to my children My son Rahim used to cut Sadiq's hair and trim his beard. Sadiq would ask Rahim to read certain books of the Promised Messiah[as] to him since he couldn't see but he had him do it just so he'd read it for his own benefit.

Muhammad Sadiq was a personal friend to two Khalifas. I remember when we were in Rabwah at Khalifatul Masih III's[rh] ranch for lunch, we were out in a yard and some work, men were drilling a well or some other type of work and I think that they were not Ahmadies, and Hazoor said something to them about who we were and where we had come from. I think he was showing how far Ahmadiyyat was reaching other parts. He then asked Muhammad Sadiq to recite some Qur'an for them, as he knew Sadiq could recite long passages. Sadiq began reciting and Hazoor being a *Hafiz*, I believe, immediately recognize the portion he was reciting and smiled and said what it was. Sadiq recited for quite a few minutes. I had been in the Movement only about 3 years at this time and I don't remember what it was that he recited but Hazoor was pleased, and I was so proud of Sadiq.

At the last UK Jalsa Muhammad Sadiq attended, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh] in his address to the Jalsa was saying something profound and people were raising slogans, and amidst the "*Allah hu Akbar's* and *Takbir's* being yelled , Muhammad Sadiq's *Takbir* was heard and his voice recognized by Hazoor. He immediately stopped his discourse and announced on MTA to the world of thousands, if not millions of viewers and listeners; " I have just heard the voice of an angel!" He then changed his subject and began introducing Muhammad Sadiq to the world. His physical condition was not good and he was seated with the late Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad, former Missionary in Charge of USA and East Africa, who helped him to his feet when the video cameras focused on him. Sadiq was visibly

shaken by this and was reduced to tears and I know they were tears of joy. I thought, "what a great blessing for my dear friend."

I remember he used to make audio tapes to send to Hazoor in place of written letters. I would help him with these sometimes. One time he was recording this letter to Khalifatul Masih IV[rh] and he asked me not to mention this to anyone and I didn't while he was alive, but I'd like to mention it now because it has a bearing on the level of spirituality my dear friend had reached, and I don't think this would be disloyal to him. He told me he thinks he had received a revelation in that he had actually heard the voice of God Almighty, Allah address him and he wanted to tell Hazoor and explain it to be sure he wasn't mistaken. He said it happened while he was in prayer late at night. I have another incident which sheds light on the spirituality of this humble son of the streets of Newark, New Jersey. He had asked me not to mention this either and not to give any names and I never did while he was alive. We were at the time trying to buy the building which is now the Baitul Wahid, the mosque in Clifton, NJ. The President called for pledges from the Jama'at members. Muhammad Sadiq had purchased the house on Renner Ave. 30 years ago, and had a 30 year mortgage on it and had just 2 or 3 payments to have paid it off. He then immediately went to refinance a second mortgage and make, I'll just say a very large pledge for the mosque. A certain brother heard of this and called him and asked if it was true that he made a pledge of xxxxx dollars by mortgaging his house again? He of course responded in the affirmative, and the brother said, "Please allow me to pay your pledge and do not mention my name." He then asked him, "Has brother Jalal done this also?" I of course had not, and had pledged only $1000.00 knowing the limitations of my resources. Sadiq asked me if I had done this and I said no. As I mentioned earlier, all Muhammad Sadiq and Bashir Afzal and Abdul Ghafoor Soofi wanted to do was go to the Mosque, and I can remember they had always contributed regularly to a local mosque fund. Now he was being called on to pledge and he saw his house as the only source of money so trusting fully in Almighty God to take care of him and depending on Him alone and believing firmly in the saying of the Holy Prophet[saw], that the building of a mosque is a great blessing, he responded to the call of his President. You can see how Allah responded to his servant. When I come across the pictures of those 3 in my photo albums I usually get teary-eyed just as I do when I come across my mother and father's photos. I know I have been blessed by knowing those 3, especially because of the period in my life when I was making the transition from the streets of New York to the community of the Promised Messiah[as].

May the Gracious, Most Merciful God raise their status in Heaven and place them in the company of His favored servants, Ameen.

Towards the end of the life of Muhammad Sadiq, he was suffering from complication of different ailments. Besides going blind in the later part of his life, which in itself was a great trial, for someone who had lived a full life with sight, he had other health problems. The members of the North New Jersey Jama'at and even some members of the New York Jama'at came to his home and

helped in different capacities to render service to this great man who was a pioneer of the Jama'at in this area. Our dear brother, Ismail Adam from Ghana who I refer to as my nephew, had just recently joined the North Jersey Jama'at and him and some brothers, I believe it was Hafiz Samiullah and Dr. Naveed Ahmad, when they came in the house and Ismail saw that Muhammad Sadiq was an African American he said to me, " I thought the brothers were bringing me to the house of a Pakistani the way they were talking about the love for Muhammad Sadiq." They came often to visit and help out around house because it was quite a burden on his wife Sister Amina who was elderly also. Sister Fatima Haneef was a regular visitor and helper also. Mubarak Jamil, a dear friend for years, would drive over in the evenings after he finished with business in Queens, NY. This by no means is a list of the many who came. As Sadiq's condition deteriorated I would ask when I came over, how he was doing and he always would say, "*Alhamdulillah*!" The only complaint I ever heard from him was that he was sorry that he can't seem to remember the passages he used to recite of the Holy Qur'an, and he can't recite his prayers like he wants to. He told me once he felt ashamed because he thought he had missed the mark on proper worship. When I heard that I thought, "Then I am in deep trouble." He often told me he was sorry that he was causing so much trouble to everybody now that he was bed-ridden. I tried to reassure him that he was no trouble at all. He would some times lose control of his bodily functions and would have to be carried to the bathroom to be cleaned up. I bought a hand held shower attachment and installed it and Ismail and I often took care of cleaning him up and his bed linen and room. I would get a call from Sister Amina some times in the wee hours of night that Sadiq had fallen out of the bed. I would jump in the car and speed up to Newark to get him back in bed . A couple of times Sadiq was on the verge of going into a coma and we'd think he was in the early stages of passing away, I would call my dear brother, Dr. Imtiaz Chaudhry and he would jump in his car and come to Newark in the middle of the night also, and he lived further south than I did, and revive Sadiq. I know of at least 2 different times that Dr. Imtiaz saved Muhammad Sadiq's life before he had to be finally admitted to the hospital.

It was his wish to be buried in *Bahisti Maqbarah* in Qadian and when he passed away, we tried to arrange it, and the late M.M. Ahmad, then Ameer of the USA, tried to help in that, but we were unsuccessful at it. His body was held up a few days from being buried right away in hopes of having his wish honored. There was now a rush to get a place for burial in New Jersey and a section of the cemetery in Totowa NJ was purchased and Muhammad Sadiq was the first person to be interned in it and a *moosi* too. Whenever some of the brothers of Baitul Wahid mosque talk about Muhammad Sadiq, someone almost always mentions that it was because of him that we purchased a cemetery.

It's been 10 years since Muhammad Sadiq passed away from this earth, and still hardly a day does not go by that I don't think about him, Bashir Afzal, Abdul Ghafoor Soofi and my mother and father. May Allah have mercy on the souls of all of them. Ameen

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Dr. Qazi Muhammad Barkatullah

Dr. Qazi Muhammad Barkatullah was born on April 15,1931 in Lahore, Pakistan. He obtained his B.A., BEd., M.A., and M.O.L. (Master of Oriental Learning) degrees from Punjab University, Lahore., Pakistan. He came to the United States to further his education and enrolled in Indiana University - Bloomington, where he earned his MS and Ph.D. degrees.

Dr. Barkatullah‘s extensive teaching experience included professorships in Pakistan and America. He had administrative experience as department head and principal in Pakistan and as an academic dean in Holly Springs, MS and Jackson, TN.

He settled in Jackson, MS in 1970, where he taught in the Education Department at Jackson State University for 27 years.

Dr. Barkatullah published a number of literary and research works in Pakistan and America. His body of work includes:

Introduction to Educationa1 Measurement and Evaluation (1971), Islam, the Religion for Mankind (1972), Jesus Son of Mary (1973), Education During Middle Ages Under the Muslims (1974), The Lady Mary (1975). Educational Opportunities in USA for Overseas Students (1976), and *Basic Concepts in Statistics (1979).*

He was a member of the editorial board of *The Review of Religions* in 1984-1985, and published monthly articles in the *Syrian-Lebanese Star* newsletter from 1989 to 2006.

Jesus Son of Mary is still considered one of the most historically accurate and thought-provoking books on Jesus among members of the Ahmadiyya Community.

Dr. Barkatullah remained a faithful member of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at in New Orleans until his death on October 4, 2006. He is survived by his wife Nasira, three sons (Zia, Noaman, Rizwan), three brothers, and three sisters.

AL -SALAAM

THE SOURCE OF PEACE

ZIA H SHAH MD

By the Time, Surely, man is ever in a state of loss, Except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and exhort one another to preach Truth, and exhort one another to be steadfast." (Al Asar 103:2-4)

اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ تَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوْبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ ؕ اَلَا
بِذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوْبُ ﴿۲۹﴾

Those who believe, and whose hearts find consolation in the remembrance of Allah. Aye! It is in the remembrance of Allah that hearts can find comfort." (Al Raad, 13:29)

هُوَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِیْ لَاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ اَلْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوْسُ
السَّلٰمُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَیْمِنُ الْعَزِیْزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ؕ
سُبْحٰنَ اللّٰهِ عَمَّا یُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿۲۴﴾

"He is Allah and there is no god besides Him, the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of peace, the Bestower of security, the Protector, the Mighty, the Subduer, the Exalted. Holy is Allah, far above that which they associate with Him." (Al Hashr 59:24)

Despite man's tremendous progress in the last century in the scientific and technologic arenas, in the moral spheres the human race is marching towards a destruction. Other than in the area of some of business ethics there is constant deterioration in all the moral spheres. This deterioration has lead to the destruction of the personal or psychological peace of mankind despite prosperity in physical amenities. The results of this deterioration are all too obvious and are written all over the wall. According to BBC almost one billion people world wide are suffering from different anxiety and depression disorders that are grouped together under the label of neurosis. Not millions, but a whole one billion people, or one fifth of the world population, is suffering significant mental problems. Unfortunately, the general western media does not frequently cover these issues, so very often we loose sight of, or fail to appreciate as to what is happening to humanity in general.

A belief in the living God especially His attribute of *Al-Salaam*, the bestower of peace and *Al-Sameeh* would have prevented many of these people from succumbing to many of these problems. These numbers reflect a tragedy of gigantic proportions. So many of our fellow citizens in the western world remain in oblivious to the fact that we are in a constant need of Allah, especially his attribute of *Al-Salaam,* or the source of peace for the humanity.

In the USA alone, approximately 21 million American adults, or about 10 percent of the U.S. population age 18 and older in a given year, have a mood disorder. Among these almost 15 million have major depression. Bipolar disorder affects approximately 5.7 million American adults, or about 2.6 percent of the U.S. population age 18 and older in a given year. As many as 20% of adolescents may experience major depression.

Approximately 40 million American adults ages 18 and older, or about 18.1 percent of people in this age group in a given year, have an anxiety disorder. These disorders are subdivided into Panic Disorders, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder and different Phobias.

In many of these cases, these problems are the result of a lack of belief in the living God, especially His attributes of *Al-Salaam* and *Al-Sameeh*. Allah is the bestower of peace. He does that through many means one of which is His hearing of prayers. The lack of belief in Allah is accompanied by a lack of action on the teachings of the All Knowing. This lack of belief and lack of action leads to different ills in the personal life. This results in a cascade of events that lead to a loss of peace and harmony in human society. The lack of such harmony at a personal and societal level in turn leads to an increasing prevalence of different neuroses including anxiety and depression. It is no wonder that we have ended up in the sorry state that we find almost a billion people suffering from these maladies. Restoring the belief in a living God and leading a moral life will go a long way in ameliorating these problems. It is reasonable to say, on the authority of the Holy Quran, that many of these mental human sufferings are the result of a lack of true deeply ingrained belief in the teachings of the Holy Scripture.

اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ تَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوْبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ ؕ اَلَا
بِذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوْبُ ﴿۲۹﴾

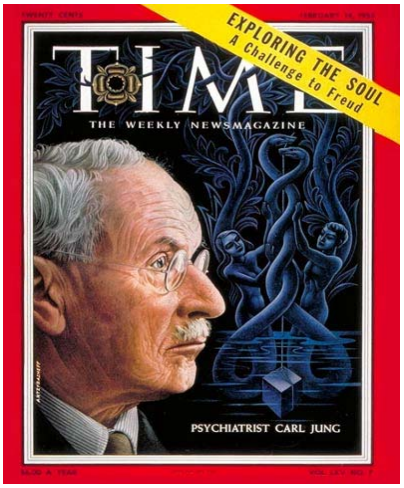
This teaching is beautifully summarized in one of the verses of Sura Raad, "Those who believe, and whose hearts find consolation in the remembrance of Allah. Aye! It is in the remembrance of Allah that hearts can find comfort." (Al Raad, 13:29) In the very next verse the Holy Quran promises, "Those who believe and act righteously, shall have happiness and an excellent retreat." (Al Raad, 13:30)

The distinguished psychiatrist, Dr. Carl Jung, who was a contemporary of Freud and is well known for several contributions in the field, says in the chapter, "Psychotherapists or clergy" of his book, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*:

> "During the past thirty years, people from all the civilized countries of the earth have consulted me. I have treated many hundreds of patients. … Among all my patients in the second half of life -- to say, over thirty-five -- there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook."

The famous psychiatrist has declared in no uncertain terms that the origin of most psychiatric problems including anxiety, depression and personality disorders lies in moving away from true religious values. These disorders can be lumped under the term neuroses as opposed to psychoses.

Since Carl Jung's time we have come to know a lot more about the biology and chemistry of our brain. It is now known that many of these disorders have biological bases so such a sweeping conclusion may not be in order. For the sake of simplicity, we could use the analogy of a computer and divide the psychological problems into two groups. There are the hardware problems and then the software problems. The analogy, however, is not perfect. In the case of the brain, unlike the computers, the hardware and the software are in constant interaction and a state of flux, and can have tremendous influence on each other. For broad understanding one can summarize that, whereas, some of the neuroses are due to biological issues, most are due to lack of religious outlook, as the famous psychiatrist has so eloquently described. The term psychoses includes more serious conditions like schizophrenia and bipolar depression also known as major depression. The psychoses, in contrast to neuroses usually have a biochemical basis.



What is obvious to most people is that it is not possible to achieve peace of mind in time of distress without reference to a religion. For instance, the commonest defense mechanism that the humans resort to in time of dire need is prayer. This fact is so popularly recognized that there is a common proverb, "There are no atheists in foxholes." However, in time of peace and relative comfort we find ourselves and many people around us in relative happiness and satisfaction. This, however, is a mirage or an illusion. Without reference to Allah this happiness can prove to be without foundation and fleeting. The life of an atheist proceeds smoothly until he does not face any difficulty and he is not exposed to any trial. However, as soon as he is faced with any significant trial he loses hope and becomes susceptible to despair (11:10 and 17:84). This susceptibility is due to the fact that he does not have an infinite resource of God that he can bank on.

وَإِذَآ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَى ٱلْإِنسَٰنِ أَعْرَضَ وَنَـَٔا بِجَانِبِهِۦ ۖ وَإِذَا
مَسَّهُ ٱلشَّرُّ كَانَ يَـُٔوسًا ﴿٨٤﴾

[17:84] And when We bestow favor on man, he turns away and goes aside; and when evil touches him, he gives himself up to despair.

According to Islam, one of the natural instincts of man is his search for an Exalted Being towards whom he has an inherent attraction (7:173). This natural instinct is manifested by an infant from the moment of its birth. As soon as it is born, it displays this characteristic in its inclination towards its mother and is inspired by her love. As its faculties are developed and its nature begins to display itself openly, this inherent quality is displayed more and more strongly. It finds no comfort anywhere except in the lap of its mother. If it is separated from her and finds itself at a distance from her, its life becomes bitter. It feels no joy apart from her. So much so that orphan children who are not adequately cared for die because of emotional deprivation. What, then, is the nature of the attraction which an infant feels so strongly towards its mother? It is this same instinct of search for his beloved God that is manifesting in a different form. When this urge is not appropriately satisfied and substituted for by different idols and inappropriate goals and means, that man falls victim to different psychological ills. Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah[as] has pointed out:

"When the attraction is misdirected, then the man remains in search of something that he misses, the name of which he has forgotten, and which he seeks to find in one thing or another. A person's love of wealth, offspring, wife or a musical voice are all indications of his search for the True Beloved, the God Almighty."

We have examined the root causes of anxiety and depression on the authority of the Holy Quran, the Promised Messiah[as] and a well known Psychiatrist. Let us now examine some of the data that clinicians have collected over the years. Research by Diener, among others, has shown that once your basic needs are met, additional income does little to raise your sense of satisfaction with life. A good education? Sorry, Mom and Dad, neither education nor, for that matter, a high IQ paves the road to happiness. Youth? No, again. In fact,

prone to dark moods: a recent survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that people ages 20 to 24 are sad for an average of 3.4 days a month, as opposed to just 2.3 days for people ages 65 to 74.

In a recent survey by Time Magazine in 2005 on happiness they found that religion and children were the two biggest sources of happiness in most people's life. When asked, "What one thing in life has brought you the greatest happiness?", 35% said it was their children or grandchildren or both." Seventeen percent answered religion to that question. In other words family values and a belief in religion are the biggest source of peace. One could also argue with very solid supporting scientific data that religion, especially the religion of Islam with a belief in a living God is of paramount importance in maintaining the family values and happy families.

Richard Davidson, professor of psychology and psychiatry at the University of Wisconsin, reported especial brain wave activity in a lab while observing a Buddhist Monk sink deep into serene meditation. Electrical activity in the left prefrontal lobe of the monk's brain was shooting up at a tremendous rate. "It was exciting," Davidson recalls. "We didn't expect to see anything quite that dramatic." He further adds, "Happiness isn't just a vague, ineffable feeling; it's a physical state of the brain -- one that you can induce deliberately." A believer in a living God in his *Salat* is likely to have similar or better results. Happiness and positive attitudes also have a powerful influence on the rest of the body. People who rate in the upper reaches of happiness on psychological tests develop about 50% more antibodies than average in response to flu vaccines. According to a Dutch study of elderly patients published in November of 2004, those upbeat mental states reduced an individual's risk of death 50% over the study's nine-year duration. There is a very powerful mind-body connection. Other scientists have discovered that happiness or related mental states like hopefulness, optimism and contentment appear to reduce the risk or limit the severity of cardiovascular disease, pulmonary disease, diabetes, hypertension, colds and upper-respiratory infections as well.

Suicide is the eighth leading cause of death in USA. There is an increasing awareness that there is a dramatic increase in the last two decades in the rate of suicide among persons age 10 - 14 years in USA. The highest rate in the U.S. is found in white men over age 85. For the believers this is a phase of life with the greatest devotion to Allah but for non-believers it turns out to be a very risky phase of life. Four times as many men as women die by suicide; however, women attempt suicide two to three times as often as men. So, if we take into consideration the number of people who try to commit suicide then the numbers become even more staggering. It is a well-known fact to the psychiatrists that the suicide rate is much lower in people who are religiously inclined.

The Holy Qur'an says, "And when We bestow a favor on man, he goes away, turning aside; but when evil touches him, lo! he starts offering long prayers. (*Ha Mim Al-Sajdah* 41:52). In another place we read that, "When evil touches him, he is full of lamentations, But when good falls to his lot, he is niggardly, Except those who pray." (*Al Ma'arij* 70:21-23) The solution to both the problems of falling prey to despair in time of distress or falling prey to niggardliness or false pride in time of ease is to pray and submit to Allah. Talking

about the pressing and urgent need of having a communion with the All Mighty, the Promised Messiah[as] writes:

"Our paradise is in our God. Our highest delight is in our God for we have seen Him and have found every beauty in Him. This wealth is worth procuring though one may have to lay down one's life to procure it. This ruby is worth purchasing though one may have to lose one's self to acquire it. O ye, who are bereft, run to this fountain and it will satiate your thirst. It is the fountain of life that will save you. What shall I do, and by what drum shall I make the announcement that this is your God, so that people might hear? What remedy shall I apply to their ears so that they should listen? If you belong to Allah, rest assured that Allah will indeed belong to you."

(Kishti Nuh; Roohani Khazain, Vol. 19, pp 21-22)

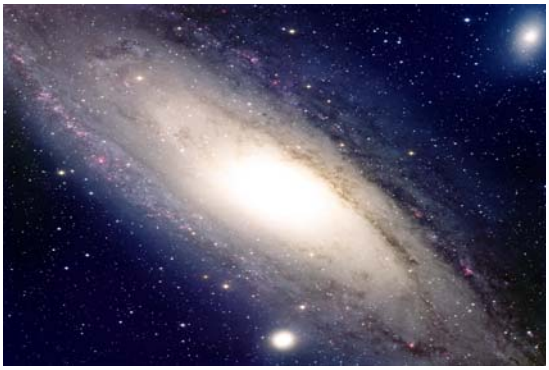
To reiterate the concept of *Sura Al-'Asr* again, which is one of the shortest chapters of the Holy Qur'an: "By the Time, Surely, man is ever in a state of loss, Except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and exhort one another to preach Truth, and exhort one another to be steadfast." (*Al-'Asr* 103:2-4) What are the mechanisms that lead to the downfall of the people who are the subject of the first part of this *Sura*?

One of the mechanisms through which generations go downhill is that they lose sight of what is important and what is unimportant or even harmful to them. Gradually their thoughts become chaotic and they become history. Allah says in *Sura Al-Hashr*:

And be not like those who forgot Allah, so He caused them to forget their own souls. It is they that are the transgressors. Al Hashr 59:20

Many generations have been destroyed in history as they lost track and ran amuck. Roman Empire was certainly one of the examples. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: Have they not then traveled in the earth so that they should see what was the end of those before them? (Al Yusuf 12:110)

Yet there is hope. Approximately, three hundred thousand noble souls joined the folds of Ahmadiyyat or true Islam this last year alone. When we contemplate on the attributes of Allah of *Al-Sameeh* and *Al-Wasi'*, when we think that He hears prayers and His treasures are infinite and He is expanding the universe possibly at the speed of light, our hearts are filled with hope, pleasure and satisfaction.



Human pleasures are associated with things that give them a sort of permanence. This is true for many things like eating and sexual activity. Eating ensures our life and sexuality leads to continuation of the species. By developing one's spirituality one ensures the longest possible survival, which is till eternity by achieving communion with the Creator. So, true spirituality translates into the greatest pleasure. It takes away the threat of non-being and nihilism. It is the best investment strategy that any human can have. The dividends are huge. This is the message in the verse of the Holy Quran that raises the "soul at rest" to the highest pedestal; "O soul at rest that has found comfort in God, return to your Lord, you well pleased with Him and He well pleased with you. Now join My (God's) chosen servants and enter into My garden" (89:28-31). Spiritual attainment and development is not a fool's paradise, it is the highest level of pleasure known to man. However, the path is long and trying.

We read a message of hope in the story of Hadhrat Yaqoob, may peace be upon him. He apparently had lost his son, Yusuf, and a few years later he lost another of his sons, but he never lost hope and optimism. He is quoted in the Holy Qur'an, "O my sons, go ye and inquire about Joseph and his brother and despair not of the mercy of Allah; for none despairs of Allah's mercy save the disbelieving people." (*Al-Yusuf* 12:88)

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Arrest and Expulsion of Ahmadies in Jedda in December 2006

Amnesty International calls for end to arrests and expulsions of foreign migrant workers on discriminatory grounds

Amnesty International is calling on the Saudi Arabian government to halt expulsions of foreign migrant workers on account of their religious beliefs and affiliations. The organization made this call after at least 14 foreign nationals, all migrant workers and members of their families from different countries, were expelled from Saudi Arabia during the past week. The workers, most of whom had been employed in Saudi Arabia for years, were all ordered to leave the country apparently because of their actual or suspected connection with the **Ahmadiyya Community**, a religious community which considers itself a sect of Islam. None are known to have been charged with any criminal offences, let alone tried and convicted.

At **least 40 other foreign workers** and their families are reported to be under imminent threat of expulsion on the same grounds, including two who are currently held at the Deportation Centre in Jeddah and are scheduled to be flown out of Saudi Arabia before this evening. Mahmud Korumban, a printing technician, and Sulayman Ahmad, a driver, are both expected to be expelled to India, their home country, although they have been legally employed in Saudi Arabia for at least eight and ten years respectively.

According to information received by Amnesty International, some **55 foreign nationals, all migrant workers and their families, were arrested on 29 December 2006 at a place of worship in Jeddah** by members of the Committee for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (CPVPV), otherwise known as the *Mutawwaeen* or religious police. They were then handed over to the civil police in Jeddah for detention. Almost two weeks later, 35 of them, including women and children, were released on 10 January 2007 when their employers, who act as their "sponsors" (*kafeel)* and who had been summoned to collect them by the authorities, arrived at their places of detention to do so. Upon being released, they were reportedly informed that they would be required to leave Saudi Arabia as soon as their sponsors had completed the necessary travel arrangements. They appear to have been allowed no opportunity to challenge the decision to expel them or the grounds for their expulsion.

Amnesty International has appealed to Saudi Arabian Interior Minister Prince Naif bin 'Abdul 'Aziz to intervene and ensure both that all those detained solely on account of their actual or suspected connection with the Ahmadiyya religious community are released immediately and unconditionally and to halt expulsions of foreign migrant workers on such discriminatory grounds.

The expulsion of the 14 individuals on the basis of their actual **or suspected membership of the Ahmadiyya religious** community is a violation of the norm of non-discrimination, a customary norm of international law binding on all states that prohibits among others any form of discrimination on the basis of religious affiliation.

Amnesty International reiterates its appeal to the Saudi Arabian authorities to halt the expulsion of all those targeted solely for their actual or suspected connection with the Ahmadiyya religious community and to ensure that any expulsion of migrant workers is done in accordance with procedural safeguards including: the ability to challenge individually the decision to expel, access to competent interpretation services and legal counsel, and access to a review, ideally a judicial review, of a negative decision.